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# JESUS AS A TEACHER

AND

## THE MAKING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

BY

B. A. HINSDALE.

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## PREFACE.

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PURSuing, as I have done for many years, the practice of the Art of Teaching, I have naturally been led to study this art on its reflective side, and also the related science of teaching, together with the history of education. This has been particularly true since, several years ago, it became my professional duty to teach these subjects. My studies in the historical field have embraced, not merely educational doctrine, or pedagogical subject-matter, but also educational method and spirit as illustrated by some of the great teachers of the world. Long ago I had given incidental attention to these last-mentioned elements in Jesus of Nazareth, while studying His lessons; but now I came to study Him distinctly from the professional point of view. I found myself at a loss which to admire most, what He taught or how He taught it. In time I began to write on the subject, and soon what I had written took the form of a series of articles bearing the title, JESUS AS A TEACHER, which appeared in "The Christian-Evangelist." My original purpose was to put the formal elements in the foreground, and to use doctrine only for the sake of illustration; and if, as time wore on, the relation of the two factors began somewhat to change, the reader will have no difficulty in discovering the reason why. However, when the series was finished the formal, art, or professional side had received the emphasis. Methods of teaching depend intimately

upon the matter taught ; more than once I have had occasion to remark that the teacher of science or philosophy, mathematics or history, could not possibly handle his subjects as Jesus handled His spiritual lessons ; while I may now observe that it is impossible to keep the lessons of Jesus out of sight while dealing with Him as a professional teacher. The series of chapters that give this book its leading title are largely composed of these earlier articles. At the same time, they have all been thoroughly reorganized and revised ; considerable additions have been made to nearly all of them, while many new topics have been introduced. The chapter entitled, "How Jesus used the Scriptures," as well as considerable portions of the one called "The Education of Jesus," appeared in nearly the same form as here in "The New Christian Quarterly."

To the leading series of chapters, a second one has been added on a somewhat related theme: THE MAKING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. These chapters are a reproduction, with the necessary revision and enlargement, of a series of articles bearing the same title that appeared in "The Disciple of Christ" in 1884. That publication is not now living, but the thanks of the author are tendered to its publishers for permission to use these articles for the present purpose. The object and point of view of this second series of chapters are adequately stated in the introduction.

It may not be amiss to state that neither of the works making up this volume (if works they may be called) is, or pretends to be, a treatise on its subject. The reader will form the truest conception of the first one when he regards it as composed of a series of studies, more or less imperfect and disconnected, dealing with many of the most important phases that Jesus presents to us as a teacher. Other phases could have been similarly treated, and these could have been treated much more thoroughly. While more systematic in plan and treatment, the

## PREFACE.

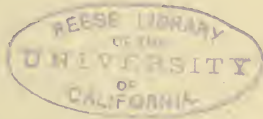
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second work is but an outline of a great subject. In writing these last chapters I had two classes of persons in mind—those who are content with an outline, and those who seek a scheme that they may follow, and more or less fill out by subsequent reading and study. But imperfect as the two series are, they are now published in the belief that the things done, as done, were distinctly worth doing.

I shall take formal leave of the volume with earnestly recommending all readers who are occupied with, or interested in, the function of teaching, no matter what the subject-matter, to study Jesus as a Teacher, and especially teachers of morals and religion. He is the great Master of ethical method. ✓

B. A. HINSDALE.

The University of Michigan, March 31, 1895.



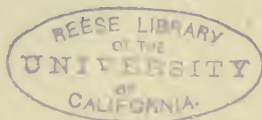




Jesus as a Teacher.







## CONTENTS.

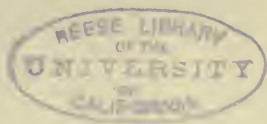
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### JESUS AS A TEACHER.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. AN INTRODUCTORY VIEW . . . . .	1
II. THE EDUCATION OF JESUS.—I. . . . .	15
III. THE EDUCATION OF JESUS.—II. . . . .	25
IV. HIS INSIGHT INTO MIND AND CHARACTER . . . . .	42
V. HIS RELATION TO TRADITION AND LEGALISM . . . . .	54
VI. HOW JESUS USED THE SCRIPTURES . . . . .	65
VII. HIS HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS . . . . .	90
VIII. HIS INSTITUTIONS . . . . .	104
IX. HIS AUTHORITY . . . . .	113
X. HIS USE OF ACCOMMODATION . . . . .	124
XI. HIS METHODS OF TEACHING.—I. . . . .	135
XII. HIS METHODS OF TEACHING.—II. . . . .	145
XIII. HIS METHODS OF TEACHING.—III. . . . .	158
XIV. HIS RECOGNITION OF APPERCEPTION . . . . .	169
XV. HIS USE OF THE DEVELOPING METHOD . . . . .	176
XVI. HIS RECOGNITION OF MORAL PERSPECTIVE . . . . .	184
XVII. HOW HE HANDLED CASES . . . . .	190
XVIII. HIS SEVERITY . . . . .	201
XIX. JESUS AND THE CHILD . . . . .	213
XX. HIS THEORY OF TEACHING . . . . .	227

## THE MAKING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. OBJECT AND POINT OF VIEW STATED . . .	249
II. THE MINISTRY OF JESUS . . . . .	254
III. THE PREACHING OF THE APOSTLES . . . . .	256
IV. THE EPISTLES . . . . .	265
V. THE GOSPELS . . . . .	273
VI. THE EVANGELICAL TRADITION . . . . .	285
VII. SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DOCUMENTS . . . . .	291
VIII. THE CANON IN ITS FIRST STAGE . . . . .	300
IX. THE CANON IN ITS SECOND STAGE . . . . .	309
X. FURTHER HISTORY OF THE CANON . . . . .	317



# JESUS AS A TEACHER.

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## CHAPTER I.

### AN INTRODUCTORY VIEW.

CHRISTIANITY consists of a Gospel and a discipline. Out of this fundamental distinction arise the two distinctive functions of the Christian ministry. One is to preach this Gospel, the other to teach this discipline: preaching and teaching. These two functions, which we constantly tend to blend and confuse, The New Testament as constantly keeps distinct and separate.

The noun *keerux* is found in the Greek Testament three times: it means an ambassador, a public messenger, a herald. The verb *keerusso* is found sixty times: its meaning is to make proclamation, to announce publicly or proclaim some message, generally of a public or official character. *Keerugma* is used eight times: it means what is announced, made public, or proclaimed. In civil affairs the Grecian *keerux* summoned the public assembly, and in military affairs he carried messages between hostile armies. These are the words that are rendered "preacher," "preach," and "preaching" in the English Testament. The words well harmonize with *uangelion*, the good tid-

ings. As De Pressensé has said: "All the expressions employed in The New Testament to designate the proclamation of the new truth set aside the notion of written documents;" "The Gospel was at first nothing but the proclamation of the good news of pardon flying from mouth to mouth."\* The central idea is well expressed in the well-known passage of Isaiah that Jesus appropriated to Himself.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
Because He anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor:  
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,  
And recovering of sight to the blind,  
To set at liberty them that are bruised,  
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.†

In the four Gospels alone *didaskalos* is applied to Jesus about fifty times: it is sometimes translated teacher, but commonly master. *Didasko* is found even more frequently: it means to instruct, to inform, to teach. *Didaskalia* and *didachee*, found less frequently, signify doctrine or teaching. These are the words that the Greeks commonly applied to the corresponding pedagogical facts. Not only in the Gospels, but also in The Acts and the Epistles the leading words of this family abound.

Such are the words that express the two primal functions of the Christian ministry, and such the ideas that these words convey. The word "ministry" itself is generic, including both preaching and teaching, and in fact all other forms of Christian service.

\* Jesus Christ: Times, Life, and Work. London, 1868, p. 133.

† Luke iv.

The prophets of The Old Testament were preachers rather than teachers. The Hebrew word *nabi* is derived from the verb *naba*, which means, in its religious sense, *to speak*, or *to sing*, *under a divine afflatus or impulse*. "Prophet" is derived from the Greek preposition *pro* and the verb *phemi*, to say or to speak. The force of the word is well expressed by Dean Stanley in this passage:

The Greek preposition *pro*, as compounded in the word "Pro-phet," has, as is well known, the three-fold meaning of "beforehand," "in public," and "in behalf of" or "for." It is possible that all these three meanings may have a place in the word. But the one which unquestionably predominates in its original meaning is the third,—"one who speaks for," or as "the mouthpiece of another." As applied, therefore, by The Septuagint, in The Old Testament, and by the writers of The New Testament, who have taken the word from The Septuagint, it is used simply to express the same idea as that intended in the Hebrew *Nabi*; not *foreteller*, nor (as has been said more truly, but not with absolute exactness), *forth-teller*, but "spokesman," and (in the religious sense in which it is almost invariably used) "expounder" and "interpreter" of the Divine Mind.\*

The original idea of preaching is well exemplified in John the Baptist.† He came preaching in the wilderness of Judea. His whole habit, character, and mission made him a preacher. He is never called a teacher, and is never said to teach. His utterances that most nearly approach teaching are his replies to the people, the publicans, and the soldiers when they ask him, "What shall we do?" He was the herald

\* History of the Jewish Church. Lect. xix.

† Matt. iii.; Mark i.; Luke iii.





or harbinger sent before the Teacher to make ready the way. He said to the multitudes that resorted to him from Jerusalem and all Judea: "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight." To the Pharisees and Sadducees he said, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Thus the very urgency of his mission—the very burden of his message—made John a preacher.

But there is a third family of words that affiliate more naturally with "teacher" and "teach" than with "preacher" and "preach." These words are suggested by pastoral life. *Poimeen* means a shepherd or pastor; *poimnee*, a flock; *poimnion*, a little flock; *poimaino*, to feed, to tend a flock, to shepherd. *Poimeen* and *poimaino* imply oversight or watch-care. These words are applied to Jesus. They bring Him before us in what has been called His best known and most loving office. He is the Good Shepherd who knows His sheep and lays down His life for them.\* It is interesting to observe that the first conception of Jesus to be expressed in art was as the Good Shepherd returning from the wilderness, shepherd's crook in hand, bowed in form, with the lost sheep lying upon His shoulders. The Christian mind was slow to express its conceptions in the form of art; but when the time came for such expression, it was natural, as Mrs. Jameson has said, that "art should embody our

\* John x. 10-15.



Lord under that form in which He directly imaged Himself, or rather in that among the many types by which He explained His mission and character to our comprehension which were most adapted to art." Of all the symbols and metaphors applied to Him in The New Testament, this one was probably best adapted to artistic expression. "No wonder, then, that the figure of the Good Shepherd should have been one of the earliest, as it was certainly the most popular and comprehensive, of Christian symbols."\* From the third century we find this symbol sculptured in relief on sarcophagi, and painted in the ceilings of the catacombs, as well as figured on lamps, seals, and gems.

While these are not the only titles conferred upon Jesus, they are the most characteristic and familiar. He is a preacher, teacher, and pastor. He preaches, evangelizes, teaches, and feeds His flock. However, He does not come before us with the habit or manner of Christian ministers who now bear the same titles. He did not travel about the country holding revival meetings. He was not the pastor of a local congregation, or the bishop of a diocese. He had no church and controlled no pulpit. He does not fill the conventional idea of a missionary. His like is not found in the great orators who have adorned Christian eloquence and shed luster on the annals of the pulpit. He corresponds neither to the Jewish scribe nor to the Greek philosopher. The scribe loved the synagogue, and perhaps still more the seminary or

\* The History of Our Lord as Expressed in Works of Art, Vol. II., pp. 340, 341.

college standing near it where scribes were trained, while the philosopher had his school. But Jesus had no synagogue or college like the scribe; no Academy like Plato, no Lyceum like Aristotle, no Porch like Zeno. He had nothing in common with the great university teachers of the Middle Ages or of recent times. He was not reproduced by the great preaching orders of the Catholic Church. We find elements that He combined appearing in some or other of these men or orders, but He had a character all His own.

If these remarks have somewhat stripped our minds of conventional furniture and awakened curiosity, let us see what real and positive ideas we can form of His ministry. To do this we must glance along the whole line of His preaching and teaching, and gather up and throw into one picture the characteristic facts and descriptions. His first recorded utterances upon subjects connected with His work are the conversations with John, Andrew, and Simon, Philip and Nathanael, found in the Fourth Gospel;\* but His public ministry began at Capernaum, on His return to Galilee after His baptism. The following are some of the facts and descriptions to which reference has just been made; no attempt is made to follow a chronological order:

“From that time Jesus began to preach” (Matt. iv. 17); “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel” (iv. 23); “And seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain: and when He was set, His disciples

\* John i. 35-51.



came unto Him: and He opened His mouth and taught them" (v. 1, 2); "He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (vii. 29); "Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching" (ix. 35); "When Jesus had made an end of commanding His twelve disciples, He departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities" (xi. 1); "The poor have the Gospel preached to them" (xi. 5); "Coming into His own country, He taught them in their synagogue" (xiii. 54); "When He was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto Him as He was teaching" (xxi. 23); "Jesus said to the multitudes, . . . I sat daily with you teaching in the temple" (xxvi. 55); "On the Sabbath day, He entered into the synagogue and taught" (Mark i. 21); "He preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee" (i. 39); "He went forth again by the seaside; and all the multitude resorted unto Him, and He taught them" (ii. 13); "And He began again to teach by the seaside: and there was gathered unto Him a great multitude, so that He entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land. And He taught them many things by parables" (iv. 1, 2); "And Jesus, when He came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, . . . and He began to teach them many things" (vi. 34); "He began to teach them [the disciples] that the Son of man must suffer" (viii. 31); "He taught His disciples" (ix. 31); "And the people resort unto Him again; and, as He was wont, He taught

them again" (x. 1); "I was daily with you in the temple teaching" (xiv. 49); "He sat down and taught the people out of the ship" (Luke v. 3); "He taught daily in the temple" (xix. 47); "One of those days, as He taught the people in the temple, and preached the Gospel" (xx. 1); "And in the daytime He was teaching in the temple" (xxi. 37); "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place" (xxiii. 5); "Now about the midst of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and taught" (John vii. 14); "Then Jesus cried in the temple as He taught," etc. (vii. 28); "Early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came unto Him; and He sat down and taught them" (viii. 2); "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing" (xviii. 20).

✓ The foregoing are perhaps one-half of the passages in the Gospels in which Jesus is said to preach and teach. He who studies them in their connections will see that they describe a singularly wide and active ministry. Jesus went about preaching and teaching in synagogues; He sat on the top of a mountain and taught; He went through the cities and villages of Galilee, preaching; He taught in the temple; He taught as He sat in a boat on the sea; He taught His disciples privately; He taught throughout all Judea from Galilee to Jerusalem. But wide and active as these passages prove His ministry to have been, they fail to show its full extent. Many of the utterances of Jesus are



introduced with words less formal than the words "preach" and "teach." He "spoke," He "said," He "answered," He "asked," He "showed," He "cried," etc. A large share of His teachings was never put in formal discourses at all. He taught in houses as well as in synagogues; by sick-beds as well as in the temple; He appears in monologue and in dialogue; He teaches small companies; He teaches single individuals. If we limit our survey to public addresses and audiences only, we shall exclude some of His most admirable instruction. We shall find no place for the conversations with Nicodemus, the woman of Samaria, and Mary and Martha. Much time was given to preparing His disciples for their future work. We find Him explaining to them such of His public lessons as they did not understand. A phrase sometimes points to a lengthy interview. Thus, John and Andrew heard their master testify of Jesus, and they followed Him. His invitation to "come and see" where He dwelt led them to the place, and they staid with Him the remainder of the day.\*

We must not omit to sketch the geographical range of this ministry of teaching and preaching. It begins with Capernaum, in Galilee. From Capernaum Jesus goes to Cana and the wedding supper. Then He ascends to Jerusalem and to the temple. He attends the passover, and holds the conversation with Nicodemus. His visit to the Holy City over, He goes to Ænon near Salim, the theater of John's labors; there we listen to

\* John i. 35-39.

the last testimony of the Baptist. Returning to Galilee through Samaria, He holds the remarkable interview with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. Now there begins a much larger ministry in Galilee; Capernaum becomes a center of labor and influence. The embassy from John is received, and the appropriate reply returned. The period is marked by His first use of parables. Again He goes to Jerusalem, and is found by the pool of Bethesda. Returning to Galilee, He again visits the towns of that province; we hear the Sermon on the Mount; it is the time of the trial mission of the Apostles. Next He journeys to Cæsarea Philippi and Syro-Phœnicia, and comes back to Capernaum. It is the period of Peter's confession. Jesus now goes the third time to Jerusalem; He attends the Feast of Tabernacles, and is brought into strenuous collision with the Sanhedrim. He returns to Capernaum for the last time. Almost immediately He goes again to the Capital, traveling through Samaria; the time is marked by the mission of the Seventy. After the Feast of Dedication, He goes to Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where He blesses the little children. He is called away to Bethany by the death of Lazarus. His mission here performed, he spends a few days in the wilderness village of Ephraim, a little north of Jerusalem. His respite from labor over, He journeys by Jericho and Bethany to the Capital, that He may attend the Passover. He makes His triumphal entry into the city, and closes His ministry of teaching and preaching. He eats His last Passover, institutes the Supper, and offers His intercessory prayer. Then fol-

low His arrest and trial, condemnation and death; the Garden of Gethsemane, the Judgment Hall, and Mount Calvary.\*

The immediate effects of His ministry were most extraordinary. Men came to Jesus singly, and in multitudes; they sought Him out in His retreat, and in public places. They thronged to the temple and the synagogue to hear Him. They crossed the sea in boats, and spent whole days in desert places. They stood on the mountain-side, and on the seashore while He taught them out of the ship. Nicodemus, the ruler, came, and Mary Magdalene; Zaccheus, and the Syro-Phœnician woman. "And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth" (Luke iv. 22). Men asked: "From whence hath this man these things? And what wisdom is this which is given unto Him?" (Mark vi. 2). "The common people heard Him gladly" (Mark xii. 37). Even the Samaritans "besought Him that He would tarry with them" (John iv. 40). The hearts of the disciples going to Emmaus burned within them as He talked with them by the way (Luke xxiv. 32). When John's disciples had taken up the body of their master and buried it, they "went and told Jesus" (Matt. xiv. 12).

One fact that is most important has been held in the background. Jesus taught in oral words. Only once is He said to have written anything, and then upon material as changing as the sand. He stooped

\* This is the succession of events as given by Neander: *The Life of Jesus Christ*.

down, and with His finger wrote on the ground.\* He was the greatest of the great oral teachers of men—teachers who write nothing, but depend upon what would seem to be the most transient means of influence. Their instrument of power is the rod of their mouth, the breath of their lips. Nor was Jesus accompanied by any scribe or reporter. He left behind him no “autobiography” or “journal,” but only pictures and voices in the hearts of men. He spoke, He wept, He wrought, He kept silent; but so powerfully had He impressed Himself upon His disciples that lengthy discourses, as well as personal remarks which cling closer to the brain, were reproduced, after the lapse of years, in a way to prove their own genuineness. He contemplated the future with a sublime confidence, and still a multitude both of words and deeds never became matter of record.† In a secondary, as well as in a primary, sense Jesus is the Sower of His own parable. Some seeds fell by the wayside and were caught up by the birds; some fell among the thorns and were choked; some fell into thin soil and were burned up by the sun; some fell into good ground and were reproduced in writing by evangelist and apostle.

Such are some of the more striking external aspects of the public ministry of Jesus. Again it may be said that He had a character all His own. In so saying, no account is taken of the matter of His teaching. While He constantly accommodated Himself to His

\* John viii. 6.

† John xx. 30, 31; xxi. 25.



times, He was as unconventional and original as Nature herself. We catch glimpses of Him in a multitude of teachers. He had something in common with the Jewish prophets, and with John the Baptist. Socrates, in the publicity of his life, in the elevation of his spirit, and in the familiarity and commonness of his teaching, approaches Him much more nearly than any other of the Greeks. He was the first teacher and preacher of the Christian Church, but no section of that Church has preserved, or could have preserved, His external type. He is not more unique in His subject-matter than in the forms and methods of His teaching.

While preaching and teaching are separate and distinct, they are still closely related. First, in respect to matter. The preacher announces the Gospel with a view of making converts or disciples; the teacher instructs or builds up the disciples in Christian doctrine or discipline. Secondly, in respect to method. Both the message of the preacher and the doctrine of the teacher are addressed to man's mental nature, the main difference, from a pedagogical point of view, being that the message appeals more directly to the active or motive powers of the mind. Both the preacher and the teacher strive to influence conduct with reference to the same great end, and their work cannot be wholly separated. The modern Church has its evangelists and pastors, and so had the ancient Church. Evangelist and pastor differ mainly in the placing of the emphasis. The New Testament idea combines the two elements in one minister. Jesus commanded the Twelve: "Go ye therefore and

teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”\* So Paul was appointed a preacher and a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and love. And so it was with Jesus Himself; He preached and He taught, and in these chapters it will suffice to permit the two functions to flow together.

This sketch, all too faintly drawn, will serve as an introduction to a series of studies of Jesus as a Teacher.

\* Matt. xxviii. 20.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE EDUCATION OF JESUS. I.

THE two main qualifications of a teacher, pedagogically considered, are native aptitude and acquired preparation. Perhaps it will offend the sensibilities of some even to suggest that Jesus possessed the second of these qualifications. Their habitual view of Him may repel the application of the words "training," "education," "cultivation." However that may be, tests that apply to other minds apply to Him. ✓ also; and the cause of religion has nothing to gain but much to lose by seeking to withdraw Him from competition with other teachers. The manner in which the Evangelists treat His childhood forbids such a method. Their treatment is justly considered a mark of verisimilitude. Even their silence becomes expressive when we consider what writers following their own fancies would have said. The difference between the true Gospels and the false ones, in this regard, has often been remarked upon. The true contain a few incidents that please by their simple and natural beauty; the false abound in those that offend by their grotesque absurdity. As is well known, Luke is the only Evangelist who connects the infancy and the manhood of Jesus by even so much as a general statement or characterization. And all



that he tells us is contained in thirteen verses.\* Moreover, it is easy to read into these verses what was never in the mind of their author. The words, "And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him," are paralleled by the account given of John the Baptist, "And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit." †

Neither is it necessary to see too much in the personal incidents connected with the visit to Jerusalem. Twelve was an important age under the Jewish economy. "It was the age at which," says Canon Farrar, "according to Jewish legend, Moses had left the house of Pharaoh's daughter; and Samuel had heard the voice which summoned him to the prophetic office; that Solomon had given the judgment which first revealed his possession of wisdom; and Josiah had first dreamed of his great reform." ‡ Probably these stories were myths, generated by ideas and images current among the Jews. Oriental children are precocious; both the climate and social customs stimulate early development; and so it was in ancient times. Jewish education bore strongly in that direction. The Jewish boy must now have a trade for his own support; his parents could no longer sell him for a slave; he was no longer called "little," but "grown up," and had become "a son of the law." Boys of twelve or thirteen were found in the army, and that was a suitable age at which to contract a marriage. It must therefore have been a time to which

\* Chap. ii. 40-52. † Chap. i. 80.

‡ The Life of Christ, Vol. I., pp. 67, 68. London.

the Jewish boy looked forward with great interest and expectation, and that could not fail powerfully to impress his mind. Instances of extraordinary precocity are met with all through the Jewish history; their appearance was welcome, for the Rabbis, with all their faults, welcomed wisdom in the child. The conduct of Jesus does not appear to have struck the doctors as remarkable in itself; it was the character of His understanding and answers that filled them and the bystanders with astonishment. Josephus speaks of his own early great memory and understanding. "Moreover, when I was a child," he says, "and about fourteen years of age, I was commended by all for the love I had to learning; on which account the high priests and principal men of the city came then frequently to me together, in order to know my opinion about the accurate understanding of points of the Law."\* When we dwell upon such facts as these; when we add to them other facts in regard to the course and nature of Jewish education; when we consider the character of Jesus's own training, and reflect that the visit to Jerusalem, occurring at this time, could not fail deeply to impress Him,—we shall see that His tarrying behind in Jerusalem, and His seeking out the doctors, while extremely interesting and suggestive events, are not such surprising facts as many make them. Undoubtedly, the most prescient incident was His reply to His mother, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" but even its significance may be exaggerated. Strongly prophetic sayings are heard in the mouths of

\* Life, V.



children not unfrequently. Certainly, differ as any one may from the trend of these remarks, he must admit that the Jerusalem story derives its principal interest from the whole life of which it is a part, and that it affords no reason why we should not as freely inquire what influence formed the character of the Christ-child as the character of other children.

There are two relations under which education may be regarded. One is its relation to nature and life, the other to the schools. One is general and one specific, and each has its own interest. We shall look at the education of Jesus from both of these points of view.

What the mind is no one has been able to tell us; we know only its manifestations or phenomena, and some of its laws. We know that it is self-active, that its activity leads to expansion or growth, and that this expansion is education. But the mind can act only as it acts upon something, and so its growth depends upon its being brought into relation with some object or objects. All our knowledge, feeling, and will flow directly or indirectly from the establishment of contact between the self-active principle and external nature, the facts of human life, and, reflexively, the mind itself. The cultivation of the race dates from these points of contact, and so does the cultivation of every individual that is born into the world. Not only is education older than the school historically, but it is essential to its existence practically. Then as soon as men began to observe, to think, and to accumulate experience, there began the development of tradition—a transmitted body of experience that soon

came to be, and that has always continued to be, a powerful, though a secondary, source of education. Thus nature, society, life, and the mind itself are the primordial sources of human training. Tradition comes later, and literature last of all.

It is well understood that natural factors—climate, soil, and particularly the external aspects of the world—exert a great influence upon our life, character, and destiny. “Our earliest impressions of the external world,” it has been said, “become, unconsciously to us, the prism by which everything is afterwards colored.” In a great degree individuals and races are fashioned by natural factors. Nowhere is this more observable than in the Orient; the repose, conservatism, meditative or reflective habit, and poetic-ethical communion with Nature that are so characteristic of Oriental life, are no doubt ultimately traceable to natural causes. More narrowly, the human spirit, working under the conditions which Nature imposed, created the fundamental elements of that civilization which forms the background of the history of the Chosen People. Still more narrowly, these conditions were potent forces in the history of the Chosen People itself. Renan gives us this picture of the situation of Nazareth:

The horizon of the town is limited, but if we ascend a little to the plateau swept by a perpetual breeze, which commands the highest houses, the prospect is splendid. To the west are unfolded the beautiful lines of Carmel, terminating in an abrupt point which seems to plunge into the sea. Then stretch away the double summit which looks down upon Megiddo, the mountains of the country of Shechem with their holy places of the patriarchal age, the mountains of Gilboa, the picturesque little

group with which are associated the graceful and terrible memories of Solam and of Endor, and Thabor with its finely-rounded form, which antiquity compared to a breast. Through a depression between the mountains of Solam and Thabor are seen the valley of the Jordan and the high plains of Peræa, which form a continuous line in the east. To the north, the mountains of Safed, sloping toward the sea, hide St. Jean d'Acre, but disclose the Gulf of Khaifa. Such was the horizon of Jesus. This enchanted circle, the cradle of the kingdom of God, represented the world to Him for years. His life even went little beyond the limits familiar to His childhood. For, beyond, to the north, you almost see upon the slopes of Hermon, Cesarea Philippi, His most advanced point into the Gentile world, and to the south, you feel behind these already less cheerful mountains of Samaria, sad Judea, withered as by a burning blast of abstraction and of death.\*

Also this one of the group of companions that Jesus first called about Him:

The beautiful climate of Galilee made the existence of these honest fishermen a perpetual enchantment. They prefigured truly the kingdom of God, simple, good, happy, rocked gently upon their delightful little sea, or sleeping at night upon its shores. We cannot conceive the intoxication of a life which thus glides away in the presence of the heavens, the glow, mild, yet strong, which this perpetual contact with nature gives, the dreams of these nights passed amid the brilliancy of the stars, beneath the azure dome of the illimitable depths. It was during such a night that Jacob, his head pillowed upon a stone, saw in the stars the promise of an innumerable posterity, and the mysterious ladder by which the Elohim came and went from heaven to earth. In the time of Jesus the heavens were not yet closed, nor had the earth grown cold.†

But this is not all. Wherever men live in immediate contact with nature, they also live in immediate contact with one another. Renan thus felicitously

\* *Life of Jesus*, Chap. II.      † *Ibid*, Chap. III.



marks one difference between Eastern and Western life:

The education of the schools marks among us a wide distinction, in the relation of personal worth, between those who have received it and those who have been deprived of it. It was not thus in the East, nor generally in the good old ages. The crude condition in which, among us, in consequence of our isolated and entirely individual life, he remains who has not been to the schools, is unknown in these forms of society where moral culture, and especially the general spirit of the time, are transmitted by perpetual contact with men. The Arab who has had no schoolmaster is often highly distinguished nevertheless; for the tent is a kind of school always open, where the meeting of well-bred people gives birth to a great intellectual and even literary movement. Delicacy of manners and acuteness of mind have nothing in common in the East with what we call education. On the contrary, the schoolmen are considered pedantic and ill-bred. In this state of society, ignorance, which among us condemns a man to an inferior rank, is the condition of great deeds and of great originality.\*

The East seems to lend itself with peculiar ease and effect to the ends of the ethical and religious teacher. Markedly was this the case with Palestine in the days of Jesus. It was the land of proverbs, psalms, and parables. It had long been touched with the beauty of poetry. Although an old country, its civilization was yet primitive in many of its features. Its caravans and tabernacles, its flocks and vintages, its threshing-floors and wine-presses, its very geography and history, idealized by prophet and psalm-writer, furnished an abundant stock of striking and beautiful images. Nay, those objects are there to-day to explain the constant allusions to them in both the Testaments. Its air of repose, so well adapted to serious contem-

\* Life of Jesus, Chap. x.

plation, is strikingly different from the busy energy of the West. It is the land of strong contrasts and striking effects. According to Renan, the inequality of men is more marked than in the West. He says that even to this day "it is not rare to see rising there, in the midst of an atmosphere of general wickedness, characters whose grandeur astonishes us." We look at the figure of Jesus through the vista of eighteen centuries. The time and country in which He lived, and the whole of Jewish antiquity, furnish a most impressive background to the picture. No one can doubt that the whole effect is in some degree due to the admirable setting. The Gospels were written by plain men; the only trace of literary art is its total absence; but no man of real feeling can read even the plainest of these compositions without deep emotion. We cannot think of the story of Jesus as having been written in the speech of the scientific and commercial West, without a loss of both power and beauty.

It may be added that, aside from districts like Judea, life in Palestine was free and unconventional. This was particularly the case in Galilee. Rabbinical influence was slight in Nazareth. Joseph and Mary belonged to the common people. They were poor. Joseph was a carpenter. Jesus Himself was a carpenter. Thus He dignified and ennobled honest toil. But His station and occupation in life did not cut Him off from the great influences that in the East form character. He must be blind indeed who does not see in the Gospels abundant traces of the effects upon Him of both the natural and social factors that made up His environment. The natural scenery and

the social life that He saw about Him are woven, not merely into the form, but also into the texture of His teaching. Evidence of His intimate relations with the natural world, and of His humble estate, are found in greatest abundance. The Divine mind, the human heart, and nature, are closely united. One proof of this is the fact that the Teacher who has best expounded the first, has also best met the needs of the second, and made the best ethical use of the third.

NOTE.—Reference has been made above to the permanency of Oriental life, and to the idealization, or symbolic use, of its history and geography. Few Christians stop to think how largely their spiritual vocabulary is drawn from these sources. I quote two paragraphs from Dean Stanley that well illustrate these thoughts.

In one respect the site and description of Eastern countries lends itself more than that of any other country to this use of historical geography. Doubtless there are many alterations, some of considerable importance, in the vegetation, the climate, the general aspect of these countries, since the days of the Old and New Testament. But, on the other hand, it is one of the great charms of Eastern traveling, that the framework of life, of customs, of manners, even of dress and speech, is still substantially the same as it was ages ago: Something, of course, in representing the scenes of The New Testament, must be sought from Roman and Grecian usages now extinct; but the Bedouin tents are still the faithful reproduction of the outward life of the patriarchs—the vineyards, the cornfields, the houses, the wells of Syria still retain the outward imagery of the teaching of Christ and the Apostles; and thus the traveler's mere passing glances at Oriental customs, much more the detailed accounts of Lane and of Burckhardt, contain a mine of scriptural illustration which it is an unworthy superstition either to despise or to fear.

Finally, there is an interest attaching to sacred geography hard to be expressed in words, but which cannot be altogether overlooked, and is brought home with especial force to the Eastern traveler. It has been well observed that the poetical events of the Sacred History, so far from being an argument against its Divine origin, are striking proofs of that universal Provi-

dence by which the religion of The Bible was adopted to suit, not one class of mind only, but many, in every age of time. As with the history, so also is it with the geography. Not only has the long course of ages invested the prospects and scenes of the Holy Land with poetical and moral associations, but these scenes lend themselves to such parabolical adaptation with singular facility. Far more closely as in some respects the Greek and Italian geography intertwines itself with the history and religion of the two countries; yet, when we take the proverbs, the apologues, the types furnished even by Parnassus and Helicon, the Capitol and the Rubicon, they bear no comparison with the appropriateness of the corresponding figures and phrases borrowed from Arabian and Syrian topography, even irrespectively of the wider diffusion given them by our greater familiarity with the Scriptures. The passage of the Red Sea—the “wilderness” of life—the “Rock of Ages”—Mount Sinai and its terrors—the view from Pisgah—the passage of the Jordan—the rock of Zion, and the fountain of Siloa—the lake of Gennesareth, with its storms, its waves, and its fishermen, are well known instances in which the local features of the Holy Land have naturally become the household imagery of Christendom.—*Sinai and Palestine*, pp. xxi-xxiii.



## CHAPTER III.

### THE EDUCATION OF JESUS. II.

EDUCATION suggests to most minds a school, and we are only too apt to forget that there is an older, a more comprehensive, and a more valuable culture. The human spirit first took hold of the natural world, then of the facts of human life, and last of all of itself. Tradition dates from the dawn of human experience; letters and literature came much later; and it is probable that the school came later still. "The House of the Book" is the appropriate name that the Jews gave to the school. We are now to see what the school did for Jesus. Still we cannot separate the school from the family and the synagogue.

The effect of politics, religion, and social institutions upon schools and education is very great. That the Roman government was one of written laws, courts, and records; that there was a regular census and various colleges, priests, and magistrates; that much stress therefore attached to writing, documents, and archives,—these are facts which strongly influenced education at Rome. The Jews furnish a still more striking example. Their national history began in 1491 B. C. (according to Usher's chronology) at Sinai. Then and there the Law of Moses was given,

one of the most comprehensive, powerful, and permanent bodies of legislation ever enacted. It was a political, civil, religious, and domestic code all in one. It was definite and absolute, and was enforced by the strongest sanctions. It regulated the whole life of the Jew—his house, dress, food, employments, domestic arrangements, the distribution of his property, politics, and civil and religious life. Furthermore—and the significance of this fact cannot well be exaggerated—the Law was from the first reduced to writing. It is noteworthy that writing, books, and reading are first met with in The Bible in connection with the giving of the Law and the events immediately leading to it.\* The material upon which the Decalogue was written fitly symbolizes the enduring character of its substance, and of the whole legislation of which it is a part. Goethe has fitly said that the Hebrew race is the strongest, the most steadfast, the most persistent race; † and the causes are found, not so much in its original qualities, as in the character of its legislation and the course of its history. The legal discipline of the nation was enforced by the most powerful agencies.

1. It was enjoined upon parents in the most impressive manner that they should teach the history, the precepts, and the ordinances of the Law to their children. Thus the national history and institutions became a part of domestic discipline.‡

2. Domestic discipline was re-enforced by ecclesiastical discipline. Moses made the Jewish priest a

\*Exod. xvii. 14; xxiv. 4-7.

† Wilhelm Meister, Chap. ix.

‡ Exod. xii. 25-28; Deut. vi. 5-15; 20-25.



teacher. The holy order instructed the people, not only in the details of the temple service and in ceremonial casuistry, but also to some extent in the Law itself.\*

3. The kings of a religious turn enjoined the teaching of the Law to the people, and took measures to have their directions carried out.†

4. The prophets dwelt upon the teaching of the Law, as well as spiritualized it and delivered new revelations.

These were the educational agencies that worked previous to the carrying away to Babylon. The Babylonian exile wrought a great transformation in Israel. "During the seventy years of captivity on the banks of the Euphrates," it has been said, "a profound change occurred in the character of the Hebrew nation. Prophecy had ceased. The priest had lost all his authority. The man of importance henceforth, the man who is heard and obeyed with respect, is the scribe, the man of the book, the scholar, who knows the ancestral records, and can teach the principles of the Law, the violation of which had brought upon the nation such great trials." Ezra led the exiles back to the fatherland; he brought forth the book of the Law and read it to the people; but Ezra stands for the beginning of the new order of things, rather than the restoration of the old order. That system of instruction, discipline, and worship the various phases of which are represented by the words "scribe," "rabbi," "rabbiniism," "doctor," "teacher," "eld-

\* Deut. xxi. 5; xvii. 8-13, 18; xxxi. 10-13.

† 2 Kings xxii. 8-14; 2 Chron. xvii. 7-9; Neh. viii. 1-8.

er," "reader," "lawyer," "tradition," "synagogue," "sanhedrim," and "Talmud," dates from the time of Ezra. To describe this system would lead us too far from our path; but we must not fail to observe that the new organization made Judaism, as a system, firmer and stronger than it had ever been before; that in time it included a cycle of schools coextensive with the nation, and that it exalted the teacher. First came the school or the college of the Law connected with the synagogue; afterwards the school considered as "The House of the Book." The new system, superinduced upon the old one, constituted the most efficient organization of human training that the world has ever seen. Looking merely to strength and permanency of results, better educational material than lay at the hand of the Jewish teachers can neither be found nor imagined. The Law was clear and positive, admirably adapted to cut deeply into the memory. The national history stimulated and energized the mind and molded the life to the highest possible pitch. Considered as instruction, the Jewish system strongly appealed to every faculty of the soul at every stage of its development. Its impressive ordinances did their work long before the words of the Law could be understood, or the inspiration that the history breathed could be received.

Jewish education began with the mother. What the true Jewish mother, considered as a teacher, was, we know from both the Testaments and from many other sources. The very household duties that she performed molded her children in accordance with

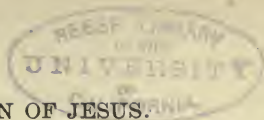
the national discipline. "The Sabbath meal, the kindling of the Sabbath lamp, and the setting apart of a portion of the dough from the bread for the household—these are but instances with which every 'Taph,' as he clung to his mother's skirts, must have been familiar." The bit of parchment fastened to the door post, on which the name of the Most High was written, and which was reverently touched by those who came and went with fingers that were then borne to the lips, would be among the first things to arrest his attention. Long before the child could go to school or synagogue, the private and united prayers and the domestic rites, whether of the weekly Sabbath or of festive seasons, would indelibly impress themselves upon his mind. In mid-winter there was the festive illumination in each home, with its symbolic meaning. Then there was the cycle of public feasts and fasts, most of which lay within the observation of the child: The Feast of Esther, the Pass-over, the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of the New Year, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles. These early sense-elements of education associated themselves with the mother. More than this, it was in the school of the mother's knee that the stories of patriarchs and prophets, of statesmen and warriors, of poets and sages, of kings and judges, wise men and patriots, and of the great Lawgiver himself—the whole forming the very best body of material for the purposes of child-nurture found in any language—were told and retold until they became parts of the mind itself. It was not strange, but quite the contrary, that Timothy, although the son of a Gentile and liv-

ing at a distance from any school or synagogue, should have thoroughly known the Holy Scriptures from his infancy. As teachers of their children, the women of every country may learn lessons from the matrons of Israel.

Still it was the father who was bound to teach his son. To impart to the child the knowledge of the Law was as great a spiritual distinction as to have received it from Moses could have been. To this paramount duty all engagements must give way. As soon as the child could speak his religious education began. First came verses of Scripture that made up the *Shema*, or the creed; next came other passages from the same source, short prayers, selected sayings, and psalms. He was early taught his birthday text—some verse beginning with, ending with, or at least containing the letters of his Hebrew name. Like all the Orientals, the ancient Jews paid the greatest attention to the cultivation of the memory. Forgetfulness was as reprehensible as ignorance. Large portions of the Scriptures were cast in the forms most likely to be remembered, as rhythm and proverb. The words of the wise—that is, the true wisdom teaching, the *gnome*, or the maxim—are like nails fastened by masters of assemblies, as well as like goads.

The child was sent to school at the age of five or six years. His regular education now began. From the teaching of the alphabet, or of writing in the primary school, to the farthest limit of instruction in the academies of the Rabbis, all was marked by extreme care, wisdom, accuracy, and moral and relig-





ious purpose as the ultimate object. The children were gathered for instruction in the synagogues and school-houses, where the teacher, generally the *Chazan*, or officer of the synagogue, "imparted to them the precious knowledge of the Law, with constant adaptation to their capacity, with unwearied patience, intense earnestness, strictness tempered by kindness, but, above all, with the highest object of their training ever in view. To keep children from all contact with vice; to train them to gentleness, even when bitterness had been received; to show sin in its repulsiveness, rather than to terrify by its consequences; to train to strict truthfulness; to avoid all that might lead to disagreeable or indelicate thoughts; and to do all this without showing partiality, without either undue severity or laxity of discipline, with judicious increase of study and work, with careful attention to thoroughness in acquiring knowledge—all this and more constituted the ideal set before the teacher, and made his office of such high esteem in Israel." The Rabbis often gathered their disciples about them in the open air, in the fields and groves; as, indeed, Oriental teachers are in the habit of doing to this day.

Up to ten years of age The Bible was the sole textbook; from ten to fifteen the *Mischna*, or traditional law, was used; and after that the pupil was admitted to the discussions of the Rabbinical schools. So extensive a course of study, however, was taken only by those who showed decided aptitude for learning. Bible study began with the Book of Leviticus; then came other parts of the Pentateuch; next the Proph-

ets, and finally the Hagiography. The Talmud was taught only in the higher schools.

Jewish education was conducted on what is now called the intensive plan. The home, the school, and the synagogue reinforced one another. The public services of religion—the readings, prayers, recitations, psalms, and sermons of the synagogue—deepened the channel that was made by the teacher's efforts. The Scriptures, owing to their cost, could not be found in the homes of the middle classes and the poor; but a copy belonged to every school and synagogue. To preserve the integrity of the text, copies of portions of the Holy Books were deemed unlawful; but exceptions were made of certain sections that were expressly used in the teaching of children. The history of the period from the creation to the flood, Leviticus i.-ix., and Numbers i.-x. are especially mentioned. \*

The mechanical arrangements of the synagogue, as well as of the worship, were well calculated to impress the mind of an Oriental. The lowest of the officers of the synagogue was the *Chazzan*, or minister, who sometimes acted also as schoolmaster. Then there were the elders, or rulers of the synagogue, with their *Archi-synagogos*, or chief, forming a local council or sanhedrim. The chief ruler superintended the service, choosing those who participated. To these regular officials we have to add those who officiated during the service, the *Scheliach*, *Tsibbur*, or dele-

\* The above account of Jewish education is drawn mainly from Ederheim: *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Book II., Chapter ix. See also the same writer's *Sketches of Jewish Social Life in the Days of Christ*. Chaps. vii., viii.



gate of a congregation, who, as its mouthpiece, conducted the devotions; the interpreter, or *Methurgeman*, and those who were called on to read in the Law and the Prophets, as also to preach. It was as *Scheliach* (*Tsibbur*) that Jesus acted at Nazareth, as related in Luke iv. At the opening, the *Scheliach* ascended to the reading desk that stood on the *bema*, and first uttered two prayers. Then followed the recitation of the *Shema*, or creed, from *Shema*, "peon," with which it began. Then came another prayer from the desk, followed by the eulogies or benedictions, the one who officiated standing before the ark. Next came prayers especially suited to the day, followed by a second group of eulogies. Then the priests, if any were present, spoke the blessing, elevating their hands to their shoulders; if no priests were present, the leader repeated the benediction. Next ensued the final eulogy, followed sometimes by still other prayers, fixed or free. The liturgical part of the service over, the minister brought forth a roll of the Law from the ark. On the Sabbath at least seven persons read portions of the Law, none less than three verses. After the Law followed a section from the Prophets. "As the Hebrew was not generally understood, the *Methurgeman*, or interpreter, stood by the side of the reader, and translated into the Aramæan verse by verse, and in the section from the Prophets, or *Haphtarah*, after every three verses. But the *Methurgeman* was not allowed to read his translation, lest it might popularly be regarded as authoritative. This may help us in some measure to understand the popular mode of Old Testament quo-

tations in The New Testament. So long as the substance of the text was given correctly, the *Methurgeman* might paraphrase for better popular understanding. Again, it is but natural to suppose that the *Methurgeman* would prepare himself for his work by such materials as he might find at hand, among which, of course, the translation of the LXX. would hold a prominent place. This may in part account alike for the employment of the LXX., and for its Targumic modifications, in The New Testament quotations." The reading over, an address or sermon followed, provided some person was present who was capable of instruction. The preacher was called *Amora*. It was common to close the sermon with a reference to the Messianic hope of Israel. The service closed with a short prayer. \*

How thorough the Jewish discipline was, is well avouched by familiar passages in The New Testament. Witness those† relative to Saul of Tarsus and Timothy. Susannah was taught by her parents the Law of Moses.‡ Josephus bears this deserved testimony to his countrymen:

Our principal care of all is this, to educate our children well; and we think it to be the most necessary business of our whole life to observe the laws that have been given us, and to keep those rules of piety that have been delivered down to us. . . . For there are two ways of coming at any sort of learning and a moral conduct of life; the one is by instruction in words, the other by practical exercises. Now other lawgivers have sepa-

\* This account is also drawn from Edersheim, Book III., Chapter x. An extremely interesting account of Jewish preaching is found in this chapter. See also Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Chaps. xvi., xvii.

† Acts xxii. 3; 2 Tim. iii. 15.

‡ See the Apocryphal book of that name.

rated these two ways in their opinions, and choosing one of those ways of instruction, or that which best pleased any one of them, neglected the other. . . . But for our legislator, he very carefully joined these two methods of instruction together ; for he neither left these practical exercises to go on without verbal instruction, nor did he permit the hearing of the law to proceed without the exercises for practice. . . . And, indeed, the greatest part of mankind are so far from living according to their own laws, that they hardly know them. . . . But for our people, if anybody do but ask any one of them about our laws, he will more readily tell them all than he will tell his own name, and this in consequence of our having learned them immediately as soon as we became sensible of anything, and of our having them, as it were, engraven on our souls.\*

And similarly Philo: "Since the Jews look on their laws as revelations from God, and are taught them from their earliest childhood, they bear the image of the Law on their souls. They are taught, so to speak, from their very swaddling-clothes, by their parents, masters, and teachers, in the holy laws, and in the unwritten customs, and to believe in God, the one Father and Creator of the world."†

In no other country has teaching ever been so much magnified as it was in Judea. In no other country has the teacher ever attained to such an exalted position. Few priesthoods, if any, have ever attained to such unquestioned mastery over the minds of men as the Rabbis gained. This is attested both by facts and by maxims. "The people which knoweth not the law is accursed." "A town in which there is no school must perish." "Jerusalem was destroyed because the education of children was neglected." "Get thy-

\* Against Apion, i. 12; ii. 17, 18, 19.

† Quoted by Dr. Geike: *Life and Words of Christ*. Vol. I., p. 173.

self a teacher." "Make the study of the Law thy special business." "An ignorant man cannot be truly pious." "The more teaching of the Law, the more life; the more school, the more wisdom; the more counsel, the more reasonable action." "A bastard who knows the Law takes precedence of a high priest if he be ignorant." The honor due to a teacher bordered on that due to God. The common discourse of the Rabbi was as much to be revered as the Law itself, and even more. To dispute with a Rabbi, or to murmur against him, was as sinful as to murmur against God. The Jew was to prefer his teacher to his father; the one had given him temporal life, the other eternal life. If his father and a Rabbi were both carrying burdens, he must assist the Rabbi to the exclusion of his father; if they were both confined in prison, he must redeem them in the same order. It is related that on one occasion as the high priest was returning from the Temple on the day of atonement, two Rabbis passed by, when the crowd, that had been following the priest, forsook him and paid reverence to the two teachers.\* Farther than this the glorification of the teacher cannot go.

Such was the compass and thoroughness of the system of training under which the Jewish boy passed at birth. The subjection of Jesus to His parents at Nazareth involved His subjection to this system. While we are not told that He ever went to school, it cannot be doubted that He did go. How fully the

\* See Schürer: *The Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*. Div. II., Vol. II., Par. 27; and Geike: *Life and Words of Christ*. Vol. I., Chaps. xii. and xvii.



Jewish system of schools was developed in His time, is indeed somewhat uncertain. Edersheim says there can be no reasonable doubt that then the primary school existed throughout the land. Later on, tradition ascribes to Joshua son of Gamaliel the introduction of schools in every town, and compulsory education in them for children above the age of six. "In all probability," he says, "there was such a school in Nazareth;" but learned Rabbis were not in Nazareth either then or afterwards.\* Schürer says, "It appears that even in the age of Christ care was also taken for the instruction of youth by the erection of schools on the part of the community." Of Joshua son of Gamaliel he says: "As his measurers presuppose a somewhat longer existence of boys' schools, we may without hesitation refer them to the age of Christ, even though not as a general and established institution. Joshua was high priest 64, 65 A. D."† The attainments of Jesus that suggest the school may be thus summed up: ✓

1. He was a master of the art of reading, for we are told that it was His custom to read in the synagogue at Nazareth. The question in John viii. 15, "How knowest this man letters, having never learned?" is not an expression of surprise at His ability to read, because that was perfectly well known, but rather at the range and depth of His knowledge. It is similar in meaning to another question that was once asked about Him, "Whence hath this man this wisdom?"‡

\* Vol. I., pp. 230, 233. † Div. II., Vol. II., pars. 48, 49.

‡ Matt. xiii. 54.

2. The art of writing was far less common in Judea than that of reading; still it is certain that ✓ Jesus could write. His allusions to the forms of the Hebrew letters, and His writing with His finger on the ground, according to Oriental usage, are conclusive evidence on that point.\*

3. He spoke the Aramaic dialect, which was then the vernacular of Judea. Long before Hebrew had become a dead letter; still He must have read that language fluently, unless, indeed, we are to suppose that there was an Aramaic version of the Scriptures then extant, which is a very improbable supposition. Nor is it likely that He read in the synagogue from The Septuagint. There can be no doubt, therefore, that He read the Scriptures in the original Hebrew.

4. He was profoundly versed in the Scriptures, not only in the Law, but also in the Prophets and the Psalms. Often He was able to confute the Rabbis, well read as they were, with His pungent question, "Have ye not read?" following up the words with some appropriate quotation. "That His knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures was deep and extensive," says Canon Farrar, "that in fact He must almost have known them by heart, is clear, not only from His direct quotations, but also from the numerous allusions which He made to the Law and to the Hagiography, as well as to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Joel, Hosea, Micah, Zechariah, Malachi, and above all to the Book of Psalms." The learned Canon also thinks that He was acquainted with the uncanonical books, and adduces some evidence to support that opinion.

\* Matt. v. 18; John viii. 6.



5. He was also familiar with the traditions of the Elders that time had gathered about the Law, and that, as He declared, made it of none effect. Still there is no evidence to show that He was ever the disciple of any Rabbi, as Saul was of Gamaliel, but rather the contrary.

6. He was also familiar with the Rabbinical modes of interpretation or exegesis. Moreover, He was a consummate master of all the methods of teaching that were current in His country at the time. This fact will engage our attention hereafter. These methods, however, He no doubt acquired by reading, observation, and reflection, and not by study in the schools.

So much is certain. Canon Farrar supposes that Jesus also knew Greek, and draws the inference from the fact that many of His quotations appear to have been made from The Septuagint version. The Canon thinks it possible, also, that He was acquainted with Latin. He may be right or wrong in these views, but he is unquestionably right when he says that these languages exercised little or no influence on Jesus's development. There is not in all His teaching a single indisputable allusion to the literature, philosophy, or history of Greece or Rome.\* There is not the slightest reason to think that the preparation of the Great Teacher was due in any part to facts or influences existing outside of His own country. In education He was a true son of Israel.

NOTE.—Mention has been made of the teaching function that Moses committed to the Jewish priest. It is not sufficiently understood, perhaps, that this was an innovation. The priest

\* The Life of Christ, Vol. I., p. 89-92.

*per se* is not a teacher. He is the man of the altar or temple, intrusted with ritualistic, ceremonial, and mystical duties. The Greek *hierus* means *a sacrificer*, and *hieruo* means *to slaughter for sacrifice*. The priest's position is a legal, not a moral one. So machine-like was the Pagan conception of religion, that little, if any, attention was paid to his character. Julius Cæsar was high priest at Rome. Neither were the Jewish priests, primarily, teachers. A graphic description of their principal duties will be found in Stanley's "History of the Jewish Church," Lecture XXXVI. Still, Moses did commit a limited teaching function to them. Jesus went still further; He appointed teachers and preachers, but no priests. Writing from the rationalistic standpoint, Mr. Lecky thus describes the difference between Paganism and Christianity in this regard:

It is common with many persons to establish a comparison between Christianity and Paganism, by placing the teaching of the Christians in juxtaposition with corresponding passages from the writings of Marcus Aurelius or Seneca, and to regard the superiority of the Christian over the philosophical teaching as a complete measure of the moral advance that was effected by Christianity. But a moment's reflection is sufficient to display the injustice of such a conclusion. The ethics of Paganism were part of a philosophy. The ethics of Christianity were part of a religion. The first were the speculations of a few highly cultivated individuals, and neither had nor could have had any direct influence upon the masses of mankind. The second were indissolubly connected with the worship, hopes, and fears of a vast religious system, that acts at least as powerfully on the most ignorant as on the most educated. The objects of the Pagan systems were to foretell the future, to explain the universe; to avert calamity, to obtain the assistance of the gods. They contained no instruments of moral teaching analogous to our institution of preaching, or to the moral preparation for the reception of the sacrament, or to confession, or to the reading of The Bible, or to religious education, or to united prayer for spiritual benefits. To make men virtuous was no more the function of the priest than of the physician. On the other hand, the philosophic expositions of duty were wholly unconnected with the religious ceremonies of the temple. To amalgamate these two spheres, to incorporate moral culture with religion, and thus to enlist in its behalf that desire to enter, by means of ceremonial observances, into direct communication with Heaven, which experience has shown to be one of the most universal and powerful passions of mankind, was among the

most important achievements of Christianity. Something had no doubt been already attempted in this direction. Philosophy, in the hands of the rhetoricians, had become more popular. The Pythagoreans enjoined religious ceremonies for the purpose of purifying the mind, and expiatory rites were common, especially in the Oriental religions. But it was the distinguishing characteristic of Christianity, that its moral influence was not indirect, casual, remote, or spasmodic. Unlike all Pagan religions, it made moral teaching a main function of its clergy, moral discipline the leading object of its services, moral dispositions the necessary condition of the due performance of its rites. By the pulpit, by its ceremonies, by all the agencies of power it possessed, it labored systematically and perseveringly for the regeneration of mankind. Under its influence, doctrines concerning the nature of God, the immortality of the soul, and the duties of men, which the noblest intellects of antiquity could barely grasp, have become the truisms of the village school, the proverbs of the cottage, and of the alley.—*History of European Morals, etc., Chap. IV.*

## CHAPTER IV.

### HIS INSIGHT INTO MIND AND CHARACTER.

A SUCCESSFUL teacher must combine in something like harmony four different qualifications, and a great teacher must combine them in an eminent degree.

1. A knowledge of the mind, its capabilities and functions, its laws of activity and modes of growth.

2. An ideal, model, or pattern of mind and character to which teaching shall conform..

3. A body of knowledge, doctrine, or teaching adapted to the mind and chosen with reference to the ideal.

4. Practical skill that will enable the teacher to use knowledge or doctrine in a manner that will work out the ideal. In The New Testament a person who has such skill is said to be "apt to teach," and it is made one of the qualifications of a pastor. \*

Obviously, these elements are more or less related. Knowledge of mind, in connection with the facts of environment, suggests the educational ideal. Such knowledge again conduces to skill in teaching. The same may be said of knowledge or doctrine; one cannot teach what he does not know. Once more, a clearly defined idea in relation to what is to be done



conduces to practical skill and success. Still it must be said that the four elements are not necessarily found associated together. Good scholars, for example, sometimes fail as teachers because they lack aptitude, while persons who have aptitude succeed beyond what their attainments in knowledge and doctrine would justify us in expecting. No doubt the first and the last of the four elements present as close a relation as any of the four, if not indeed the closest one. In fact, teaching skill is absolutely dependent upon knowledge of the mind. While argument to show this is not deemed necessary, it still seems desirable to offer some observations upon the kind of knowledge that causes skill.

First, this knowledge must relate to mind in its general character and attributes. When everything has been said about the mental peculiarities of races, nations, families, and individuals, the human mind still remains one. All men know, feel, and resolve; all perceive, remember, and imagine; all are susceptible to mystery and wonder, to awe and reverence; all have some sense of right and obligation; all believe in some power or cause superior to themselves. These facts are the strongest proofs of the spiritual unity of the race.

Secondly, the teacher cannot be content with this general knowledge. The Greek mind was speculative, the Latin mind practical. The same may be said of the German and English minds respectively. The Southern races of Europe are moved more by their senses and feelings than the Northern races. Communities of the same country differ in men-

tal tone and color. One is critical, exact, and cold; another warm and demonstrative. And so it is with individuals. All men are built on what may be called the same ground plan. They all have intellect, sensibility and will, consciousness and conscience, the natural and moral affections, the religious emotions, the intuitions, perceptive knowledge, memory, imagination, and thought; all have the ideas of pain and pleasure, of good and ill, of personality and responsibility. But two houses quite different in construction may be built on the same foundation and of the same materials. So it is with men. The world of man presents a variety equal to the variety of nature. No two individuals are exactly alike. One is strong in intellect, but deficient in sensibility or in purpose; a second has strong feelings, but is weak in one or both of the other faculties; a third has a sluggish imagination, but much argumentative power; a fourth, warm affections and generous impulses combined with a small sense of duty. One man will listen to argument, but cannot be moved by exhortation; another will weep at some picture of distress, but cannot see the logical relation of two thoughts; a third will give money to a beggar, but leave his debts unpaid; a fourth is as just as Rhadamanthus, and also as unfeeling. Accordingly, the knowledge of the mind that is found in books of psychology does not answer the teacher's purpose. It may qualify him to teach a man rather than a horse or a dog, but not one man rather than another man, not John rather than James. The teacher must know men in their individual characters, as well as in their general con-



stitution. He must, in other words, know minds, as well as mind.

Thirdly, the teacher must have a large first-hand, practical, and concrete knowledge of the mind. He cannot depend upon the abstract knowledge of books—their analyses, classifications, and critical discussions. This has much value, and no teacher should be without it, but for practical purposes knowledge that comes from personal observation and reflection, that roots in experience, that springs from contact with men, is of much greater value. It suggests life rather than books, aptitude rather than learning. Many persons well read in books of mental science lack the teacher's skill; while a still larger class who are strangers to such books possess this skill.

Fourthly, a good deal depends upon the manner in which the knowledge comes. Some persons learn a good deal about the mind and minds, but they learn it slowly and painfully. They accumulate valuable facts, they work out sound conclusions, but they do not make a practical application of their knowledge, or they do it in a halting or bungling manner. They know men as abstractions, not as concrete personalities. They lack tact or native aptness. Other persons are quick and penetrative; they see at once the meaning and bearing of facts; they seem to carry their minds in their eyes and fingers, and they are said to read character at a glance. The processes of feeling are quicker, though perhaps less sure, than those of logic, and these persons seem almost to *feel* rather than *think* their way. It is common to describe them as "intuitive"; but their so-called intu-

ition is nothing but a very rapid process of thought.

Lastly, this so-called intuitive intelligence in most cases is causally related to sympathy, both intellectual and moral. Persons who have one are likely to have the other, and persons who are deficient in one are likely to be deficient in the other. Perhaps the two are but different ways of saying the same thing. A large measure of this power is essential to the critic of literary productions and to the historian, as well as to the teacher. We cannot understand an author unless we get at his point of view, see things as he saw them, feel somewhat as he felt, think and argue as he thought and argued; that is, come into a sympathetic relation with him. Women are more apt to possess the intelligence that feels and the feeling that knows than men; and this is why, for some purposes, they surpass men as teachers. All teachers, to be successful, must be able to appreciate the difficulties and trials of their pupils, and to graduate their instruction to their ability, furnishing them also the needed encouragement, and particularly in the case of the young and weak. The most successful teachers are characterized by a certain simplicity of character; they are in league with human nature.

A competent knowledge of men is even more necessary to teachers of morals and religion than to teachers of the branches of secular education. A distinguished writer has said: "The difficulties of moral teaching exceed in every way the difficulties of intellectual teaching. The method of proceeding is hampered by so many conditions that it barely admits of precise demonstration or statement." \* The

\* Dr. Alexander Bain : Education as a Science, p. 399.

secular teacher is, or should be, much more than a former of intellect; he should look after the moral principles, sentiments, and conduct of his pupils, especially in schools of lower grade; but, after all, his task is simple and easy compared with the teacher whose main function is to form the moral character. A great preacher has something of the gift of the prophet, seeing things by a sort of gaze.

We do not always stop to think how God's knowledge differs from our knowledge. God is said to think and to reason, and His eye is said to be on them that fear Him. "Come now, and let us reason together." \* This is what is technically called anthropomorphic language; it is used in accommodation to human modes of speech and thought. But God does not reason or think in the sense that He collects facts or data, and then draws conclusions from them,—in the sense that He discovers what He did not know. The Almighty is not an inductive philosopher. He does not proceed by ratiocination, or in fact "proceed" at all. He reasons with men for their enlightenment, but not for His own enlightenment. We do not think of Him as learning by experience or as working out problems. The language that best fits the case is that suggested by the sense of vision. God sees, perceives, beholds. His knowledge is intuitive. Nor is the eye of the Lord upon men that He may find out something about them. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." † Men also see and perceive, and have

\* Isa. i. 18.

† Heb. iv. 13.

intuitions, but only in a limited sense. We observe and register phenomena, classify facts, deduce conclusions and laws, and build up systems; but in science and philosophy we return to the subject again and again; we seek to verify our facts and test our conclusions; and when we have finished we are not sure, save in a limited sphere, of our results. Some of the best known sciences have been largely reorganized within the last few years. We have the "new chemistry," the "new astronomy," the "new political economy," and even the "new mathematics." Particularly in the field of human conduct, where man's will is the governing faculty, we are often uncertain of our way, and sometimes are wholly lost.

Still it is easy to exaggerate the value of what is commonly called "proof." To a deep-thinking mind it is often, if not commonly, a shallow matter. Particularly is this true in ethics and religion. It does not reach the primary ideas upon which belief rests. Mr. Emerson, who never attempted to prove his teachings, and frankly admitted that he could not do so, once replied to an objector: "I am sorry if I have been betrayed into saying anything that requires proof." With him learning was intuition or insight, and he thought that other men should see things as he saw them. Proof is indeed the method of science, including theology; it has, no doubt, a function in religious teaching; but it is not the method of the highest form of religious teaching. The fundamental truths of religion are directly revealed to the human consciousness, and are not argued out or logically established. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned.



- Thus the presuppositions upon which The Bible rests are assumed, never established. It is asserted that God created the heavens and the earth, but no attempt is made to prove His existence. The Bible starts with the assumption that this is already known. Here I recall nothing that comes nearer to proof than the words of the Psalmist: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork."\* Or the words of the Apostle: "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and God-head."† The greatest religious truths lie deeper than formal reasoning. This is the reason why the greatest religious teachers have worked below the proposition-and-proof level; as said before, they have something of the prophetic gift. It may be added that no preacher who works mainly on this line will attract the most religious minds; he will not attract even those who have the piety of the intellect, to say nothing of the piety of the affections and the will. He may develop logical acumen, critical ability, and controversial power, but he will prove unequal to the generation of spirituality. He has nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Such a minister will be sure to lead his flock into the error that is now far too common,—the error of assigning a disproportionate place in religious faith and life to the understanding, to the partial exclusion of the heart.

\* Psa. xix. 1.

† Rom. i. 20.





These observations lead directly to our subject. We read in the fourth Gospel: "Now when He was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in His name, when they saw the miracles which He did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for He knew what was in man."\* The Gospels abound in illustrations of this statement. "And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" † "And Jesus knew their thoughts." ‡ "But He, knowing their hypocrisy," etc. § "But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answering said unto them." § "But he knew their thoughts." ¶ "And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their hearts, took a child," etc.\*\* "For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him." †† These terms suggest, what the circumstances confirm,—that Jesus's knowledge of men was direct, sure, and penetrating. The Divine knowledge shone out in Him. He read men, saw what was in their hearts, and needed not that any should testify to Him of man. From a pedagogical standpoint, His intuition was the first condition of His marvelous power as a teacher. It gives the clue to His sure appeals to the human heart, and to His triumphant handling of cases involving the elements of character.

Coming to practical tests, we may first speak of Jesus in relation to His countrymen. He fully understood the Jewish mind. Hence, as we shall see here-

\* Chap. ii. 23, 25.

§ Luke v. 22.

† Matt. ix. 4.

¶ Luke vi. 8.

† Matt. xii. 25.

\*\* Luke ix. 47.

|| Mark xii. 15.

†† John vi. 64.

after, He employed the methods of teaching that were best suited to the national genius and that were sanctioned by usage. There is a certain suggestiveness in Renan's characterization of Him as "the charming Rabbi."

He perfectly understood the state of the national religion in its existing form, the character of the current religious teaching, and the sects, parties, and factions into which the nation was divided. With the Hellenistic side of Judaism, He did not much come into contact; the Palestinian side He knew altogether. He exhibited equal skill and power in handling the Pharisees, with their hypocrisy, ritualism, conventional piety, and self-righteousness; the Sadducees, with their worldliness, materialism, and rationalism; and the Herodians, those selfish and unscrupulous politicians. Fully equal to His handling of the ritualist, the rationalist, and the politician, but of a very different kind, was His handling of the inquirer after truth, of the man with a troubled conscience, of the heart-broken penitent seeking forgiveness of sins. No matter how times and places and circumstances may change, He meets them all with absolute prescience, self-command, and mastery. As Rousseau says of Him in *The Emile*, "What an affecting gracefulness in His instructions! What sublimity in His maxims! What profound wisdom in His discourse! What presence of mind, what subtlety, what fitness in His replies!"

How fitting the grave discourse with Nicodemus: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." \* How perfect

\* John iii. 1-15.

in character the interview in the house of Simon: "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much." \* How consummate the conversation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well: "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up to everlasting life." †

How universal and complete was His adaptation to time, place, and circumstance is well shown by the wide circle of testimony given to Him. At the close of the Sermon on the Mount, "the people were astonished at His doctrine." ‡ The officers sent to arrest Him on one occasion, gave as a reason for not executing their commission, "Never man spake like this man." || While Nicodemus said, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God." §

This sure reading of mind and character was also the first requisite to that perennial freshness and interest that marked the teaching of Jesus. The people were subsisting, or rather famishing, upon the dry traditions, the wire-drawn distinctions, the ensnaring subtleties, the sophistic casuistry, the feeble exposition, and the ritualistic observances which the Rabbis meted out to them. The hungry sheep looked up and were not fed. He saw them hungry for the bread of life, thirsty for the waters of salvation, and He met their needs by pouring into their minds the simple yet beautiful words that are so fitly called "the words of eternal life." Waiting upon the teaching of the Rabbi was eating the husks on which the swine fed. Waiting upon His teaching was sitting down at the feast that the prodigal's father spread.

\* Luke vii. 36-50.

† John iv. 1-26.

‡ Matt. vii. 28.

|| John vii. 46.

§ John iii. 2.

Finally, His matchless power to reveal men to themselves sprang from the same source. Such power is a prime qualification of the spiritual teacher. Nothing is more common than for men to be ignorant of themselves. Paul said to the council, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." \* Jesus said to James and John, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." † Hence the thoughts of men's hearts must be revealed; they must be made acquainted with the real ends to which they aspire, the principles that guide, and the motives that incite their action.

As we shall see hereafter, Jesus sometimes argued or adduced proofs. Still, this was not His habitual, or even His customary, method of teaching. It would be impossible to resolve His teachings into a series of reasonings. In the Sermon on the Mount, He simply asserted or announced things as directly and clearly as He saw them, and this calm announcement was the substance of that authority which so charmed the multitude.

\* Acts xxiii. 1.

† Luke ix. 55.



## CHAPTER V.

### HIS RELATION TO TRADITION AND LEGALISM.

IT may sound paradoxical to say that the Jewish Rabbis were at once great legalists and great traditionalists. Jesus sets tradition over against the Law. The truth is, however, that this is a very common combination, and even a necessary one under certain conditions. Previous to the Captivity the Jews were quite disposed to play fast and loose with the Law. After that time they became as intense legalists as the world has seen. How this came about, and how legalism necessitated tradition, Dean Milman has explained in a passage that may well be quoted.

The Jews who returned from the Captivity brought with them a reverential, or rather a passionate, attachment to the Mosaic Law. This it seems to have been the prudent policy of their leaders, Ezra and Nehemiah, to encourage by all possible means, as the great bond of social union, and the unfailing principle of separation from the rest of mankind. The consecration of the second Temple, and the re-establishment of the State, was accompanied by the ready and solemn recognition of the Law. By degrees attachment to the Law sank deeper and deeper into the national character; it was not merely at once their Bible and their Statute Book, it entered into the most minute detail of common life. But no written law can provide for all possible exigencies; whether general and comprehensive, or minute and multifarious, it equally requires the expositor to adapt it to the immediate case which may occur, either before



the public tribunal, or that of the private conscience. Hence the Law became a deep and intricate study. Certain men rose to acknowledged eminence for their ingenuity in explaining, their readiness in applying, their facility in quoting, and their clearness in offering solutions of the difficult passages of the written statutes. Learning in the Law became the great distinction to which all alike paid reverential homage. Public and private affairs depended on the sanction of this self-formed spiritual aristocracy. In an imperfect calendar the accurate settling of the proper days for the different fasts and festivals was of the first importance. It would have been considered as inevitably tending to some great national calamity, if it had been discovered that the new moon, or any other movable festival, above all if the Passover, had been celebrated on a miscalculated day. The national sacrifice, or that of the individual, might be vitiated by an inadvertent want of conformity to the strict letter of the ritual. Every duty of life, of social intercourse between man and man, to omit its weightier authority as the national code of criminal and civil jurisprudence, was regulated by an appeal to the Book of the Law. Even at every meal the scrupulous conscience shuddered at the possibility, lest by some neglect, or misinterpretation of the statute, it might fall into serious offense. In every case the learned in the Law could alone decide to the satisfaction of the inquirer. \*

It is easy to follow the successive steps of this development. First, there was an intense legality; second, attempts were made to adapt the old Law, by means of commentary and exposition, to new conditions and needs; third, this commentary and exposition were clothed with authority, thus making in effect a new law; next came the oral transmission of the new law side by side with the old one, thus forming a tradition, and finally the repetition of this process to meet constantly changing conditions and needs. Thus the tradition-process tended to lengthen

\* History of the Jews, Book XVIII.

itself out interminably. It was greatly assisted by that love of subtlety and refinement which roots in man's pride of intellect, and in love of superiority. At an early stage in the development, the idea that anything new was being produced was cast off, and high antiquity was claimed for the new law. Long before the time with which we are dealing, it had become an article of faith that the Pentateuch contained "no precept and no regulation, ceremonial, doctrinal, or legal, of which God had not given to Moses all explanations necessary for their application, with the order to transmit them by word of mouth." It is written in the Mischna: "Moses received the oral law from Sinai, and delivered it to Joshua, and Joshua to the elders, and the elders to the prophets, and the prophets to the men of the Great Synagogue." \*

The general effect of the tradition-system was, as Jesus said, to make the Law of none effect.† Still, we need not suppose that this was the conscious, deliberate intention of the authors of tradition. For the most part their intention was, no doubt, quite the contrary. The Rabbis were not unlike many other commentators and system-makers. They went on refining, commenting, combining; the finished work of one became the raw materials of another; starting from different points in the original system, they reached divergent and contradictory conclusions. Thus, the commentary-system grew and grew until the Law itself was buried almost out of sight, and por-

\* Smith, Dictionary of the Bible, "Pharisees."

† Matt. xv.; Mark vii.

tions of it were repealed by a class of men who claimed to hold it in the highest esteem. In fact, they always professed that their sole object was to safeguard the Law; and the name "fence," which they gave to their commentaries, is extremely significant. In a sense the Rabbis, like all other men engaged in the same work, were the victims of their own system; they became enmeshed in webs of their own spinning, and from which they were unable to extricate themselves; moreover, their efforts tended strongly to the trampling down and destruction of what they sought to "fence" about and protect. Jewish history admirably illustrates how a tradition-system necessarily leads to the subversion of the law of which it is an outgrowth. The development along one line comes into collision with the development along another line, involving in the end the foundations of the system itself.

A well-known case, reported in two of the Gospels, is an illustration of how the Rabbinical method devoured its own children.

We read\* that certain Scribes and Pharisees who were of Jerusalem, observing that some of the disciples partook of food without first washing their hands, and so incurred defilement according to their notions, entered a complaint to Jesus. The nature of their complaint is fully shown by the facts which Mark inserts in his narrative: "For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the Elders. And

\* Matt. xv.; Mark vii.

when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels and of tables." The grievance of the Rabbis is not that the disciples have committed a breach of etiquette or of good manners, but a breach of religion. Still further, there is no pretention that the broken rule is a part of the ceremonial law; it is merely a tradition, a commandment of men. The question is, "Why do thy disciples transgress the commands of the Elders?" Wholly ignoring for the time their question, Jesus demands of them, "Why do you transgress the commandments of God by your traditions?" following up the question by giving them a pointed instance in which they do so. God had commanded, "Honor thy father and thy mother," and "He that curseth his father or his mother, shall be put to death."\* To these commandments, of course, the complainants must assent. He then proceeds to show how they have both been practically nullified by the Rabbinical development of another part of the original Law.

The Law of Moses required gifts or offerings for various purposes, as in fulfillment of a vow, and laid down rules governing them. There were rules whereby persons, animals, and property devoted to God were redeemable in money; also rules whereby persons denied themselves, or were denied by their parents, the use of things that were in themselves perfectly lawful, as, for example, wine. In effect this was laying one's self under, or being laid under, an inter-

\* Ex. xx. 12; xxi. 17.



dict not to use the prohibited articles. Out of these negative rules the Rabbis developed what is known as the "Corban system," according to which "a man might interdict himself by vow, not only from using for himself, but from giving to another, or receiving from him, some particular object, whether of food or any other kind whatsoever. The thing thus interdicted was considered as Corban, and the form of interdiction was virtually to this effect: 'I forbid myself to touch, or be concerned in any way with the thing forbidden, as if it were devoted by law, that is, let it be Corban.' "

"A person might thus exempt himself from assisting, or receiving assistance from, some particular person or persons, as parents in distress; and in short from any inconvenient obligation under plea of Corban, though by a legal fiction he was allowed to suspend the restriction in certain cases." \* Corban means "gift," and the name was given to the gift-treasury. The person uttering the word, it appears, might obtain a dispensation permitting him to devote the thing declared a gift to his own uses; or if not, the one act exempted him from further payment on account of his father. It does not appear that the Corban system had an exclusive relation to the Jew's duties to his parents, or that it was invented for the purpose of enabling him to shun those duties. It was rather a development, general in character, that proceeded along its own lines, and that came into conflict with the Law in relation to parents, as it were, accidentally. It is therefore an excellent illustration of the way in which the Rabbinical method might abrogate the

\* Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, "Corban."



Law itself, although the men who invented and used that method never contemplated anything of the kind, and would certainly have shrunk from it had they clearly foreseen its inevitable consequences. Words are hardly necessary to show that such a system, sanctioned by the highest authority, put into the hand of the selfish, the hypocritical, and the heartless, would lead to the most monstrous results, making void not merely the Law of Moses, but also the law of natural affection. Farrar justly remarks that such an "iniquitous diversion of natural charities into the channels of pious ostentation would of course undermine all parental authority." Apparently, a man might in the same way avoid paying his debts, or excuse himself from performing any of the most sacred obligations of life. It is plain that a more tremendous engine of hypocrisy could not easily be invented.

Jesus first quotes the two commandments in relation to parents, and then proceeds to show how the Corban system makes them both nugatory. In effect He tells the Scribes and Pharisees that any Jew, having something in his possession that his father or his mother may need, or that would profit his parents, and the giving of which to them would be comprehended by the commandment to honor them, has only to say "Corban" over it, that is, "it is a gift or sacrifice devoted to the Temple or to God," and he shall be free from all obligations as a son to render the needed assistance, and shall not be required, or even suffered, to do anything more for his father or his mother. Jesus declares that in this way the Rabbis have made the

commandments of God of none effect by their traditions. He says, moreover, that Isaiah's words: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me," are fulfilled in them. The further words of the quotation, "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men," seem to imply that already, in the time of Isaiah, tradition was beginning to bear its appropriate fruit. Mark introduces into the account these particulars: "Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition," and "many such like things do ye;" in other words, the nullification of the Law in relation to parents by the Corban system was only one of the many ways in which the Law was set aside.

The two narratives that we have been following are of the deepest interest for another reason. They show how the Scribes and Pharisees demanded that Jesus should Himself conform, and require His disciples to conform, to the traditions of the Elders; and also how He caused them emphatically to understand that He would do nothing of the kind. He not only repels the particular tradition to which they direct attention, but He shows how the Rabbinical method sets at naught the very Law that it seeks to conserve, and that they profess to reverence, giving the Corban system as an example. He gives only a single illustration, but His condemnation extends to the whole method. Nor is this all. He calls the multitude to Himself, and expounds to them the real law in relation to defilement. Perhaps we shall return to

this teaching again; but we must not fail here to set down its conclusion: "To eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man."

The mode in which Jesus handled the Sabbath question of His day illustrates another point, and is equally marked and significant. The celebrated episode of the corn-fields is related by three of the four Evangelists.\* As they went through the corn on the Sabbath, the hungry disciples began to pluck some of the ears, to rub out the kernels in their hands, and to eat them. The Pharisees, ever on the watch, immediately preferred a charge against them to their Master. This was not that they had taken what was not their own; in fact the Law expressly permitted such use when it was caused by the cravings of hunger;† but it was rather, "Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day." Jesus had already incurred the charge of being a Sabbath-breaker, and the incident had led to the plot already formed to compass his death.‡ The fourth Commandment was as express and definite as language could make it; § around it the Rabbis had woven their familiar webs; but the charge, as they now made it, involved the Law itself and not the commentary. Jesus does not stop to show that they have misconceived the letter of the Law; He charges rather that they are sacrificing its spirit to the letter; that they are in fact making an unlawful use of law. His argument consists in the citation of precedents that they cannot pass by. David and his company,

\* Matt. xii. 1-9; Mark ii. 23-28; Luke vi. 1-5.

† Deut. xxiii. 25.

‡ John x. 1, 16.

§ Ex. 20. 8-12.

when they were hungry, had entered the tabernacle and eaten the shew bread, which it was unlawful for any but the priests to eat. The priests themselves performed their official duties on the Sabbath, and were blameless, although the Law made no exception in their favor. Having put them to silence with these precedents, He gave utterance to one of His most far-reaching teachings. "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore, the Son of Man is lord also of the Sabbath." And so of other ordinances or other institutions of religion. On no point was the warfare that Jesus made upon Rabbinism keener than at the point brought to our attention in this paragraph, viz.: the persistent exaltation by the Jews of the letter that killeth over the spirit that giveth life.

From what an intolerable burden of puerility and oppressive observance Jesus sought to free the Jewish mind and life, slight reading of the history of the Pharisees will suffice to show. The Law provided, "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk"; which tradition interpreted to mean that the flesh of quadrupeds, or even of fowls, should not be mixed with milk in food preparations, or be eaten at the same time. It became a grave question between the schools, whether an egg laid on a festival might be eaten. The precept that an Israelite should "love his neighbor as himself," was construed to mean an Israelite as himself, and a Jewish midwife was forbidden to assist a heathen woman in the labors of childbirth. Such facts as these throw light on the burdens that were declared to be too heavy for men



to bear, and on the bondage to the elements of the world that were described as weak and beggarly.

NOTE.—The phrase “unlawful use of law” seems paradoxical. Paul suggests it, “But we know the law is good, if a man use it lawfully.” 1 Tim. i. 8. See F. W. Robertson’s sermon, “The Lawful and the Unlawful Use of Law,” based on that text. A question had arisen at Ephesus concerning the relation of the Christian believers to Jewish rites. “He does not, like a vehement polemic, say Jewish ceremonies and rules are all worthless, nor some ceremonies are worthless and others essential; but he says the root of the whole matter is charity. If you turn aside from this, all is lost; here at once the controversy closes. So far as any rule fosters the spirit of love, that is, is used lawfully, it is wise, and has a use. So far as it does not, it is chaff. So far as it hinders it, it is poison.

“Now observe how different this method is from that which is called the sober, moderate way—the *via media*. Some would have said, the great thing is to avoid extremes. If the question respects fasting, fast only in *moderation*; if the observance of the sabbath day, observe it on the Jewish principle, only *not so strictly*.

“St. Paul, on the contrary, went down to the root; he said, The true question is not whether the law is good or bad, but on what principle; he said, You are both wrong—you, in saying that the observance of the law is essential, for the end of it is charity, and if *that* be got, what matter *how*; you, in saying rules may be dispensed with entirely and always, ‘for we know that the law is good.’ ”

So far as the lesson is concerned, it matters not whether the Apostle refers to the Mosaic Law or to law in its essence, that is, the principle of constraint.



## CHAPTER VI.

### HOW JESUS USED THE SCRIPTURES.

NEVER since the Western world first accepted the Hebrew and the Greek Scriptures as the supreme and final source of religious truth, have those books been the subject of so much inquiry as to-day. The critics cast forth theory after theory to account for their origin and to explain their nature. Slowly but surely apologists change the direction of the lines of defense that they throw up about them. Slowly but surely preachers modify the methods in which they use them in preaching and teaching. Slowly but surely Christian scholars change their ideas of Biblical inspiration and Biblical authority. More and more the most cultivated Christian people seek for the real grounds of faith, and for the best ideas as to the uses and authority of Scripture. Meanwhile the printing presses print the books, and the depositories and bookstores sell them, in unexampled quantities, while they are read by constantly increasing numbers of people. These facts are an abundant justification for examining somewhat carefully the way in which Jesus, the incomparable master of religious method, used the Jewish Scriptures. In so doing, I hope to render at least a small service to some sincere and earnest students.

The common orthodox opinion of to-day is that the writings which we call sometimes The Old Testament and sometimes the Hebrew Scriptures were all originally considered of equal value and authority. Such, however, was not the understanding of the ancient Jews. The New Testament recognizes a three-fold division of these writings: The Law, the Prophets and the Psalms.\* Moreover the Jewish theory was that the Law of Moses—the Torah—contained the whole revelation of God's goodness and grace which had been given, or that could be given; it "was accounted the pre-existent and eternal law, comprising within itself the sum of all wisdom and all possible revelation." The Prophets and the Psalms, and the whole Hagiography, were regarded only as "inspired and authoritative interpretations of the Law of Moses, and nothing more." They were history, tradition, literature. The Pentateuch was styled "five-fifths of the Law;" it alone was accounted "reading" or Scripture; and the Jews, such was the hold of formal legality upon their minds, never suffered the Law and the Prophets to be written upon the same roll, while money received for a copy of the Law might not be used to purchase

\* This division corresponded in general to the arrangement of the Jewish Canon in its final form, viz: 1. The Pentateuch or Law. 2. The Prophets, including (1) the Earlier Prophets, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, and (2) the Later Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve Minor Prophets considered as one book. 3. The Hagiography (literally, "Sacred Books,") Psalms, Proverbs, and Job; Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther; Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles. The Prophets, the Psalms, and the rest of The Old Testament, in common with the oral tradition of the Scribes, are mere *kabbala* or traditional doctrine. See Professor Robertson Smith's well known work, *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, Lecture VI.

a copy of the Prophets or the Psalms. However, those remarkable writings together constituted a national literature in the fullest sense of the word. They were the peculiar strength, glory, mark, and permanence of the nation. The Lawgiver, while living before most of them were written, took good care to secure the continued ascendancy of these writings, and the teaching of the national history. Never were the youth of a nation brought up more exclusively, or more thoroughly, on the national literature and history than the Jewish youth. This is the source of the remarkable patriotism that has characterized Israel. This feature of the subject, however, has been dealt with in a previous chapter. \*

Jehovah was thus the center both of the Jewish Law and of Jewish education. Faith in Him was the source of the national discipline. The strength and glory promised as rewards for obedience, and the weakness and disaster threatened as penalties for disobedience, no doubt implied the direct intervention of the Most High in the course of history; but they can in great part be explained on rational grounds.

Coming to closer quarters with our subject, one fact that is sometimes overlooked, and still more frequently undervalued, must be set out in the strongest and clearest light. The Jewish Scriptures, like the Greek Scriptures, are practical in character; their end is ethical. It may be said of them all, as John said of his Gospel in a specific sense, "These are written that ye might believe." Sacred history is something quite different from secular history. Its

\* See Chap. iii.

aim is not the enlargement of the understanding. Its motive is not the gratification of an intelligent curiosity. It looks to faith and life. The historical books of The Old Testament are the history of God's dealings with the antediluvians, with the patriarchs, with the Chosen People. The Mosaic Law is a religious code that seeks to regulate the whole life in statutory terms, and it is impossible to imagine a more practical body of instruction. The Prophets are still more religious. Foretelling—prophecy as commonly understood—holds a subordinate place in these books. Still more, such as there is relates mainly to the prophetic nation. Not often does the vision of the prophet rest directly upon the distant horizon of the world. And so with the Wisdom literature and the Psalms. Finally, whatever may be the true theory of poetry, there is no room for question as to the Hebrew theory. Never for a moment did an Israelite indeed look upon the national poetry as being primarily works of literary art. The national poems were the Songs of Zion. In one significant saying Jesus suggests this unity of purpose, and also illustrates the Hebrew use of the words “prophecy” and “prophecy:” “For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John.”\*

It will be remembered that the Jews, in classifying The Old Testament books, did not recognize any distinction between history and prophecy; they grouped the two classes of books together under the head of “The Prophets.” This fact is significant, for it shows that the Jews regarded the two classes of books

\* Matt. xi. 13.





as having one fundamental object, viz., to teach religion; and in this they were right. We shall never understand The Old Testament writers—and particularly the Prophets—until we conceive of them as preachers and teachers above all else, some in prose and some in verse. A better account of the spirit of The Old Testament could not possibly have been given than the one that Paul gave to Timothy: “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”\*

Such being the Jew's view of the Scriptures, he would never subject them, and could never subject them, to critical inquiry or to historical investigation. He was a thorough Oriental in mind, and the Oriental mind is anything but scientific. The whole cycle of Sacred Books preached and taught, and the Jew regarded them as instruments of preaching and teaching. “The Greek words which designated belief or faith,” says Dr. Hatch, “are used in The Old Testament chiefly in the sense of trust, and primarily trust in a person. They expressed confidence in his goodness, his veracity, his uprightness. They are as much moral as intellectual. They implied an estimate of character. Their use in application to God was not different from their use in application to men. Abraham trusted God. The Israelites also trusted God when they saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore. In the first instance there was just so much of intellectual assent involved in belief, that to believe God

\* 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.



involved an assent to the proposition that God exists. But this element was latent and implied rather than conscious and expressed.”\* Greece created the intellect that has critically investigated the literature which Judea produced.

Jesus occupied in general the same attitude towards the Scriptures. He was not a higher critic. He was not a critic of any kind or name. In this regard He was as thoroughly Jewish as the Jew was thoroughly Oriental. From first to last, there is not an intimation of scientific method in His teaching. He accepted the Scriptures as His countrymen accepted them, and applied them to similar purposes. In this respect, again, He was a true son of Israel. The whole cycle of Sacred Books He accepted as of divine origin. He actually did what the Rabbis professed to do, but failed to do, owing to their equal or higher reverence for tradition. Furthermore, He accepted the primary fact of revelation without any inquiry, so far as the reports show, into the secondary causes concerned in making it. He had nothing to say about method, and propounded no theory of inspiration. What Dr. Hatch says of a single discourse is true of all His teaching. “The Sermon on the Mount is the promulgation of a new law of conduct; it assumes beliefs rather than formulates them; the theological conceptions which underlie it belong to the ethical rather than the speculative side of theology; metaphysics are wholly absent.”† This emphatic insistence upon the central fact, viz., that Jesus’s pur-

\* The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church, Lecture XI.

† Ibid, Lecture I.

pose was ethical rather than speculative or theological, is necessary to put us in right relation with the subject. At the same time, the fact that He never investigated the sources of the books that He used as instruments of teaching, can be no reason why we should not do so.

The use that Jesus made of the Scriptures presents the following interesting aspects:

I. He always speaks of them with perfect respect and reverence. He declared in the best known of His public addresses: "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." \* This passage is a striking one in two particulars. It recognizes the present authority of the Law in its full integrity; it implies that it will be fulfilled or come to an end, and that this fulfillment consists in its development into another system. Fulfillment of the Law is a subject about which He has much to say. In this sense, as in some others, He is an evolutionist. One of the most interesting historical aspects under which Christianity can be viewed is as an outgrowth of Judaism. At the heart, it is a question of the relation of Jesus to Moses.

\* Matt. v. 17-19.

II. He quotes the Holy Books freely in the course of His teachings. Sometimes He points out the fulfillment of a prophecy; sometimes applies a portion of the Law or other Scripture to some practical question; sometimes explains the true meaning of a commandment or other passage, and sometimes quotes to confute a gainsayer or discomfit an opponent. Scripture furnishes the basis of His teaching. The language of the Sacred Writers had so passed into the religious vocabulary of the times, the current methods of quotation were so loose and inaccurate, and quotation and allusion are so blended, that it is impossible to say how many distinct recognitions of Scripture are found in His teachings, but the number and range are both large.

III. While Jesus always speaks of the Scriptures with deepest respect, and charges the Rabbis with setting them at naught, He nevertheless handles them in a free and liberal spirit. Not only does He break down the "fences" that the Rabbis have set about the Law, tear them to shreds, and trample them under His feet, but He treats the Law itself with a freedom and originality that fill them with terror. In spiritualizing the Law, He goes farther than even the boldest of the prophets had gone. His method appears in many particulars. One of the most interesting of these is His constant habit of expanding Scripture, or, as we might say, of reading into it new meanings. He thus treats not merely prophetic passages, but also dogmatic passages; moreover, His meanings are sometimes new, not merely to the Jewish teachers, but also to the authors of the passages themselves.

He reads into passages of the Law senses that the Lawgiver had never intended, thus showing that Moses had builded better than he knew. For example, there are the incomparable expansions of the old teaching found in the Sermon on the Mount.\* Six subjects does He here treat in His own inimitable manner.

Moses had said, "Thou shalt not kill," and to this the Rabbis had added, "Whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment." Jesus quotes these sayings, and then proceeds to show that murder does not consist in the act of killing, but rather in the state of the heart. "But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." Moses had also said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and this Jesus changed into the following: "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." The Lawgiver had said that for uncleanness the husband might put away his wife, providing: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement." The Rabbis, by their comments on uncleanness, had resolved the Mosaic statute into an almost universal license of divorce. The most shocking violations of the marriage contract were of frequent occurrence. Jesus not only cut away the later tradition, but He expanded the original law by making fornication the only ground

\* Matt v. 21-48.



for divorce. He touched the subject more than once; He declared that Moses had made his legislation lax because of the hardness of the Jewish heart, but that the original law, which dated from the creation, and which He reaffirmed, was of a more stringent character.\* In the fourth place he treated in the same spirit the blending of law and tradition that regulated the subject of oaths. Then in many cases the law recognized the principle of *jus talionis*; "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe."† All this Jesus swept away. He commanded not to resist evil, but to recompense it with good. Finally, to the command that Moses had given, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor," which meant the Jew, the Rabbis had added the gloss, "Hate thine enemy," or the Gentile. Jesus sweeps away the gloss and goes far beyond Moses himself. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

Still another reference may be made. Should any one question whether Jesus gave the Law a new shaping, or read into the commandments a new meaning, let him consider his treatment of the Sabbath. In nothing was the Mosaic teaching more express and definite, more absolute and unqualified, than in reference to the Holy Day. The inquirer searches the

\* Mark x. 2-12.

† Exod. xxi. 24, 25.



statutes of the Lawgiver in vain for any recognition, or even intimation, of the invaluable principle, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."

Thus did Jesus expand old texts. Thus did He pour into the old bottles the new wine. Thus did He spiritualize the Jewish Law. We have a striking proof of the strength of His touch in the fact that His new commandments have superseded the old ones.

We have seen that the Rabbis put the Prophets and the Psalms far below the Law. This marks their exaltation of literalism and legalism above the spirit and life. Jesus does nothing of the kind. He treats all the books that Hé quotes with equal respect and reverence, but, being Himself a prophet, He intuitively recognizes the superiority of the prophetic spirit to the legal spirit. He handles the Law as the Prophets had handled it; He strives to bring to the surface the principles on which its commands and observances rest, that is, to spiritualize the Law.\*

IV. Jesus always quotes the Scriptures with a teaching purpose in view, either positive or negative.

\* Prof. Smith declares that the Jewish view of the superiority of the Law cannot be accepted by a Christian. "It was refuted, once for all, by the Apostle Paul when he pointed out, in answer to the Pharisees of his time, that the permanent value of all revelation lies, not in Law, but in Gospel. Now it is certain that the prophetic books are far richer than the Law in evangelical elements. They contain a much fuller declaration of those spiritual truths which constitute the permanent value of the Old Testament revelation, and a much clearer adumbration of the New and Spiritual Covenant under which we now live. There is more of Christ in the Prophets and the Psalms than in the Pentateuch, with its legal ordinances and temporary precepts adapted to the hardness of the people's hearts; and therefore no Christian can for a moment consent to accept that view of the pre-eminence of the Law, which was to the Jews the foundation of their official doctrine of the canon."—*Lecture VI.*

Still His direct object changes with time, place, and circumstances. It will answer our purpose to describe two classes of quotations.

Sometimes He quotes a passage as an argument, some fact or saying. He quotes Moses, the Prophets, or the Psalms to fortify some position, as we would say. Matt. xxii. 41-46 is an example. Reference may also be made to the numerous citations from the Prophets to prove His Messiahship. In dealing with this subject we must always remember one great change that time has worked: Jesus has changed places with the Lawgiver and the Prophets. He and His first disciples went to The Old Testament writers for witness to Him; we go to Him for witness to them.

We are now in a position to understand why it is that Jesus makes a larger, and particularly a sharper and more dogmatic, use of the Scriptures in His controversies than He does in ordinary teaching. Most of these controversies were with the Rabbis. The Rabbis professed to reverence Scripture, while in fact making it null and void; and He delighted, if we may use the expression, to show how ignorant they were, or how regardless of its teachings. His great object was to vindicate the truth, and to rescue it from the hands of those who perverted it; but to do this involved a concrete personal element. The Rabbis sat in Moses's seat, and taught with the authority that the position gave them; they were the representatives of the national religion and the guides of the people; they prided themselves above measure upon their learning and piety. They set "fences" about the

Law, and declared all men who did not know the Law accursed; they bound heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and laid them upon men's shoulders; they made broad their phylacteries and enlarged the borders of their garments; they loved the uppermost rooms at feasts, the chief seats in synagogues, greetings in the markets, and to be called Rabbi, Rabbi. They were blind leaders of the blind; and the progress of truth required that Jesus should expose their pride, their hypocrisy, and their ignorance. They were His antagonists, and He must overwhelm them. Hence the vigor with which He exposed their pretensions to superior knowledge and wisdom. He often demanded, and especially when they had been charging Him or His disciples with some violation of tradition or of the Law, "Have ye not read?" following up the question with some reference or quotation that, if they had known or regarded it, would have saved them from their mistake.\* Thus He said to those who complained about His disciples' plucking the ears of corn on the Sabbath, "If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless."† It is impossible to read these thrusts, the point of which we wholly miss unless we take all the facts into account, without thinking of the effect with which the great Athenian teacher used his irony on a class of men having some points of likeness to the Rabbis, and of the similar result.

More frequently, and particularly in His ordinary

\* Matt. xii. 3; xix. 4; xxi. 16, 42; xxii. 31; Mark ii. 25; xii. 10, 26.

† Matt. xii. 1, 7.

discourses, the purpose of Jesus in quoting Scripture is not argumentative or probative at all, or at least not dogmatic. It is rather moral, and in these cases His handling is marked by all the freedom of the spirit. He quotes passages that commend themselves to men's spiritual sense,—passages that “find men,” and so carry their own authority with them. He does not quote them because they are better statements of truth than His own would be, but because they are well known, and because, coming from revered sources, they carry with them an associated force, sentiment, or beauty that cannot belong to any words newly spoken. It is impossible not to recognize in these quotations a large literary or rhetorical factor. He aims to illustrate and to enforce truth, and resorts to the same methods that other teachers use for that purpose. His object is to point a moral, if not to adorn a tale. Some of His quotations from the Prophets, if not indeed the larger number of them, come under this head. He does not quote them so much to prove disputed points of doctrine or of history as to render more effective His own teaching. Sometimes it is a mere allusion, and not a quotation at all.

For example, He capped the climax of His refutation of the Corban system with the words: “Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”\* We are not to suppose that Isaiah had primarily in mind

\* Matt. xv. 7, 9.



the particular men whom Jesus is now addressing; the language and all the circumstances attending the utterance of the prophecy forbid absolutely such a supposition. Nor, secondly, is it probable that the prophet had these men in mind at all. The Speaker's Commentary thus analyzes Isaiah xxix., in which the passage is found: "1. In verses 1-6 the prophet paints the humiliation of literal Zion in the presence of her enemies, and then in verse 7 passes suddenly to the overthrow of those enemies (whoever they may be). 2. In verses 9-17 he tells the worldly Jews that *they* must be punished as God's enemies. 3. In verses 18-24 he shows what the effect of this punishment would be. The chaff would be scattered away, and the true Israel come forth to view." Undoubtedly the prophet was preaching to the people immediately before him. Still Dean Alford's words are perfectly true: "The portion of Isaiah from which this citation is made (Chaps. xxiv.-xxxv.) sets forth, in alternate threatenings and promises, the punishment of the mere nominal Israel, and the salvation of the true Israel of God. And, as so often in the prophetic word, its threats and promises are for all times of the Church—the particular event then foretold being but one fulfillment of those deeper and more general declarations of God, which shall be ever having their successive illustrations in His dealings with men." A third writer puts the case thus: "The traditionalists (Scribes and Pharisees) to whom Jesus speaks, were open to the same charge as Isaiah's contemporaries; their reverence for the oral tradition had blinded them to the deeper spirit and meaning of the Law. Jesus,



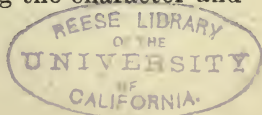
like Isaiah, attacks the men and the opinions that were held in highest regard by the people in His day.”\* The prophetic denunciation was equally suited to the traditionalists whom Jesus addressed and to the traditionalists whom Isaiah addressed; moreover, it is equally suited to traditionalists at all times and in all places, Christians as well as Jews, ministers as well as Rabbis. Isaiah did not prophesy of men who rendered lip-service in the time and country of Jesus any more than he prophesied of those who render lip-service in our time and country.

Another example of quotation made by way of application or illustration, and a very interesting one, is found in Matt. xiii. 14, 15: “And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive; for this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.” Isaiah had used this language with immediate reference to his country and his time. What he said is perpetually true, and is therefore of universal application under similar circumstances. In Isaiah’s time, in the time of Jesus, and in our own time, we meet men who do not hear in hearing or see in seeing, but are gross of heart, and so are not converted and are not healed; but it can not be shown that there is anything in the passage which makes it more applicable to the time

\* Toy: Quotations in the New Testament, p. 44.

of Jesus than to our own time, unless, indeed, this class of men was relatively larger or more perverse then than now.

The various formulæ of quotation found in the Gospels, "That it might be fulfilled," "Thus it is written," "That it might be fulfilled that was spoken of by the prophet," etc., have provoked much controversy. Into these discussions it is needless here to enter. It is obvious that just what they mean is a difficult question; that there is no reason to suppose that they always mean the same thing; that the precise meaning in a given case must be determined from the nature of the passage quoted and the manner in which the quotation is made, and that extreme theories on either side should be avoided. Sometimes it seems clear that the prophecy quoted has a distinctly definite sense, but in other cases it is only illustrative and emphatic. No possible reason can be assigned why many of the passages that Jesus quotes as "fulfilled" in Himself, or that the Evāngelists quote as fulfilled in Him, may not be equally fulfilled in men now living. The fact is they are so fulfilled, and perhaps not least strikingly so in the very men who deny such a possibility. "It does not appear that Jesus considered it necessary for an ancient prophecy to have been *primarily written of Himself* (much less to have been understood by its writer as referring to any one precisely like Jesus), in order that such prophecy might be *fulfilled in Himself*. He taught that everything which the ancient inspired seers of the nation had said concerning the redemption of the people by the servant of Jehovah, concerning the character and



work, the reign, sufferings, death, and final triumph of the Lord's Redeemer for the nation, was now to be completely fulfilled." \*

V. The form of Jesus's quotations is a topic of much interest and significance. It is a part of the larger subject of quotations in the New Testament. The following are the principal elementary facts that are to be considered in dealing with the subject:

1. Save a few passages and scattered words, The Old Testament was written in the original Jewish vernacular, the Hebrew language.

2. Some centuries prior to the age of Jesus Hebrew became a dead language, giving place to Aramaic, a cognate Semitic tongue. One result of this change was that the Jews, with the exception of the scholars, were now unable to read or understand their Scriptures in the original language.†

3. To a great extent, but not wholly so, The Septuagint, the Greek version made in Alexandria in the second and third centuries B. C., took the place of the Hebrew original. In some degree this was the case even in Palestine, where conservatism reigned almost unchecked. Furthermore, the Greek Bible differed more or less in parts from the Hebrew Bible now existing, and also from the one existing in the

\* George T. Ladd: "What is the Bible?" p. 81.

† "Before the time of Christ, people who were not scholars had ceased to understand Hebrew altogether; and in the synagogue, when the Bible was read, a *Meturgeman*, as he was called, that is, a dragoman, or qualified translator, had to rise and give the sense of the passage in the vulgar dialect. The Pentateuch was read verse by verse, or in lessons from the Prophets three verses were read together, and then the *Meturgeman* arose, and did not read, but gave orally in Aramaic the sense of the original. The old Hebrew, then, was by this time a learned language, acquired not in common life, but from a teacher."—Smith, *Lecture II*.

time of Jesus; the result being that the two Bibles offered many discrepancies in matter and many more in form.

4. The Greek version, no more than the Hebrew original, met the popular needs of Palestine, for the spoken language was the Aramaic. Accordingly versions or paraphrases of portions of the Scriptures called Targums were made into that language, which circulated first in an oral and afterwards in a written form. Whether there were written Targums as early as the time of Jesus, seems to be uncertain. Some have supposed that there was a complete Aramaic version extant in His time, either oral or written. In Palestine at least it was the Hebrew original that was read in synagogues, a fact which made the services of an interpreter indispensable.

5. The considerable cost and comparative rarity of the Hebrew and Greek versions, and the inconvenient form which they had in common with all ancient books, caused the memory to be far more trusted in quotation and in teaching than at the present time.

Putting the three main facts together—the variety and the variations of the versions and the large use made of the memory—we should antecedently expect that the quotations found in The New Testament, those made by Jesus included, would offer many points of difficulty to seekers after agreement of either form or matter. And such is the fact. The complete indifference that Jesus was wont to show towards the letter or form, and His thorough devotion to substance or spirit, to say nothing of the other causes, would naturally lead us to expect that He



would exercise great freedom in respect to the letter and form of His quotations. And so it is. The literary habits of the writers of The New Testament were those of the time in which they lived. Modern quotations together present innumerable inaccuracies; ancient quotations relatively a much greater number.

VI. Another fact should be at least mentioned. Jesus often refers to books of Scripture by name. We are not to suppose, however, that these references settle the fact of authorship. Here comes in the principle of accommodation, which will form the subject of a future chapter. To make a particular application of this principle, some critics argue from its contents that the book called Isaiah must have been the work of more than one writer, and to them it is replied, "But Jesus calls it Isaiah." The reply is worthless. Jesus applied familiar names to familiar things, and His calling any book by the name that it universally bore proves only the currency of the book and the name. His respectful mention of a book, and His use of it in teaching, prove the estimate in which He held it.

It is hard for one who has fully caught the spirit of The Old Testament in its nobler portions, or the spirit in which Christ handled it, to appreciate the importance that is accorded to certain controversies. What matters it whether there was one Isaiah or more? The meaning and the value of the book intrinsically are in no way affected by its authorship. Is not the prophecy there all the same, whichever view we accept? The question is indeed a perfectly



proper one for scholars to investigate; but the great contention about Isaiah now going on, in a religious point of view, does not make one hair white or black. That will be a happy day for the cause of true religion when men come to see the difference between religious and scholastic questions.

Differ as students may on minor points, the principal views advanced in this chapter hardly admit of doubt or disputation. Jesus always handled The Old Testament with filial reverence. He valued its books, not on account of their historical, critical, or theological interest, but on account of their practical or ethical interest. He was anxious about the life or spirit, and indifferent to the form or letter. He propounded no theory of inspiration, and attacked none; but He could not have ground the formal, verbal, or mechanical theory to finer powder than He did had He made the effort. This He did indirectly, both by the genius of His teaching and by the habitual form in which He quoted The Old Testament. The want of agreement between His quotations and the originals is a source of difficulty only to those who seek in The New Testament what it makes no claim to contain. His plain intimation that the "jots" and "tittles" of the Law should pass away, while He clung tenaciously to its moral or ideal element, is a plain recognition of the antithesis between the letter that killeth and the spirit that maketh alive. His discrimination between the legal tithes of mint, anise, and cummin, and the weightier matters of the Law—justice, mercy, and faith—shows as conclusively that He firmly grasped the great principle of moral perspective.

I have said that while Jesus propounded no theory of inspiration, and attacked none, He yet ground the formal, verbal, or mechanical theory to fine powder. If the word and letter of Scripture were originally inspired, we must suppose it was for some great and even necessary reason; but no such reason can be seen, or even imagined, so long as Jesus, who came to fulfill Scripture, treated the word and letter as though they were things of no value. No teacher has shown more indifference to the form than He who was so careful of the substance. Again, while Jesus propounded no theory of inspiration, He always taught according to one. A theory is implicitly contained in the matter and the manner of His teaching. His theory is that the substance, the reality, the content of Scripture, is inspired, not the word and letter. We may call it the dynamical theory in contradistinction to the mechanical one.

Some further conclusions from the premises before us are not less certain. There is in the Church that Jesus planted no place for any fixed, set, and universal form of creed or system of theological teaching. There is no place for any rigid, inelastic, and universal system of ecclesiastical polity or government. There is no place for any final and authoritative interpretation of Scripture. The Rabbis indeed thought—and many since them have repeated the mistake—that they could fix things forever. Jesus came and set at naught their work. Moreover, the very process in which they were engaged should have taught them better. The science of Biblical exegesis, if exegesis be a science, is progressive. It depends on

the human mind and on time as well as on subject matter. It has been demanded that men should come to the Bible with minds vacant and uncolored. This never was. This never will be. The men of any age or country read the Bible as they read other books, through the prism of their own cultivation. Men cannot get away from themselves. There is in Scripture no euphrasy and rue that effectually purge the visual nerve. Hence it is, as has been said, that "no permanent change takes place in the religious beliefs or usages of a race which is not rooted in the existing beliefs and usages of that race. The truth which Aristotle enunciated, that all intellectual teaching is based upon what is previously known to the person taught, is applicable to a race as well as to an individual, and to beliefs even more than to knowledge. A religious change is, like a physiological change, of the nature of assimilation by, and absorption into, existing elements. The religion which our Lord preached was rooted in Judaism. It came 'not to destroy, but to fulfill.' It took the Jewish conception of a Father in heaven, and gave it a new meaning. It took existing moral precepts, and gave them a new application. The meaning and the application had already been anticipated in some degree by the Jewish prophets. There were Jewish minds which had been ripening for them; and so far as they were ripe for them, they received them." \* But neither the individual nor the race stands still. The human mind expands; moral experience accumulates; forms of thought and organization become old and vanish

\* Dr. Hatch, Lect. I.

away; men see farther and farther into the heart of things; society works out new ideals, and throbs with a new spirit. The letter of Scripture remains the same, but men read into it new meanings. Let any man of intelligence study in succession the conceptions of Christianity that are found in the Fathers, in the Middle Age doctors, in the controversial writers of the modern era, and finally the conceptions of the most enlightened Christian men of to-day—and he will have the most striking proof that history affords that Christianity is essentially a spirit, and not a letter, or a form, or a dogma. The assumption that any formulation of religious belief, or any cast of church government, can forever bind the intelligence and the will of man, is without support in either reason or experience, in either science or Scripture. The word of the Lord shall endure forever. But the spirit and the life,—they are the word of the Lord.

NOTE.—An abridgment of the admirable excursus in which Canon Farrar deals with the Quotations of The New Testament is subjoined.

These quotations have been examined and tabulated with great care by Mr. D. C. Turpie, in ‘The Old Testament in the New.’ He establishes the following remarkable results: There are in The New Testament 275 passages which may be regarded—all but a very few of them quite indisputably—as quotations from the Old; of these there are only 53 in which the Hebrew, The Septuagint, and The New Testament agree, *i. e.*, in which the Hebrew is correctly rendered by the LXX, and quoted from the LXX by the Apostles and Evangelists. Besides these, there are 10 passages where the incorrect version of the LXX has been altered into accordance with the Hebrew; 76 where the version of the LXX is correct, but has been varied by The New Testament writers; 37 where a faulty version of the LXX has been accepted; and no fewer than 99 where The New Testament differs alike from the Hebrew and from the LXX. This result may be tabulated as follows:



Passages in which the LXX version is correctly accepted,	-	-	-	53
“ “ “ “ “ “ altered,	-	-	-	10
“ “ “ “ “ “ incorrectly accepted,	-	-	-	37
“ “ “ “ “ “ altered,	-	-	-	76
Passages in which the Hebrew, the LXX, and The New Testament all differ,	99			

In this tabulation (1) many of the differences are extremely minute, and (2) the words “correct” and “incorrect” merely mean an inaccurate agreement or disagreement with the original Hebrew. To these must be added three passages (John vii. 38, 42, and Eph. v. 14), which can only be classed as doubtful allusions.

The bearing of these facts on the letter-worshiping theory of “inspired dictation” will be seen at once. While they leave untouched the doctrine of a Divine grace of inspiration and superintendence, they shatter the superstitious and anti-scriptural dogmatism which asserts that every “word and letter” of The Holy Book is supernaturally inspired. To hold the theory of inspiration in this latter form is, in the first place, to deny the plain language of Scripture itself, the plain teaching of Christ, and the plain indications deducible from apostolic and prophetic usage; and, in the second place, to incur the guilt of setting up a colossal and perilous stumbling-block in the path of all rational godliness. It may warn insufficiently educated readers from uncharitable attacks upon such views [as the Canon holds], to know that these views are also those of not a few of those living, as well as of former theologians, whose names stand highest and whose authority is the most deservedly respected in the Church of England. Conspicuous among the latter are the names of Luther and Calvin. Anyone who will read the comment of Luther on Psalm xx., and that of Calvin on Psalms viii., xl. and xlviii., will perhaps be surprised to see the freedom with which they have expressed on this subject the common-sense and honest view which may startle the supporters of a mechanical theory of inspiration, but would not have startled, on the one hand, an Origen, a Jerome, an Augustine, a Gregory of Nyssa; or, on the other, the leading intellects among the great Reformers.—*Life of Christ, Excursus XI.*



## CHAPTER VII.

### HIS HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS.

It is common for men to call Jesus the most original of teachers. None are more given to pronouncing upon Him this eulogium than some of those who do not accept the traditionary Christian view of His nature and character.

“He unites in Himself,” says Theodore Parker, “the sublimest precepts and divinest practices, thus more than realizing the dream of prophets and sages; rises free from all prejudice of His age, nation, or sect; gives free range to the spirit of God, in His breast; sets aside the Law, sacred and true, honored as it was, its forms, its sacrifice, its Temple, its priests; puts away the doctors of the Law, subtle, irrefragable, and pours out a doctrine beautiful as the light, sublime as heaven, and true as God. . . . Try Him as we try other teachers. They deliver their word, find a few waiting for the consolation who accept the new tidings, follow the new method, and soon go beyond their teacher, though less mighty minds than he. Though humble men, we see what Socrates and Luther never saw. But eighteen centuries have passed since the sun of humanity rose so high in Jesus; what man, what sect, has mastered

His thought, comprehended His method, and so fully applied it to life.”\*

“A man belongs to his age and race,” says Renan, “even when he reacts against his age and his race. Far from being the continuator of Judaism, Jesus represents the breaking off with the Jewish spirit.

. . . The general progress of Christianity has been to separate more and more from Judaism. Its perfection will be in returning to Jesus, but certainly not in returning to Judaism. The great originality of the Founder, therefore, remains complete; His glory admits no rightful sharer.”†

And these encomiums are true and deserved in much more than the relative sense in which discriminating minds use such language.

Still, men are coming more and more to see that history is continuous, not discontinuous; that, with all its so-called epochs, periods, and eras, it is a unit; and that, great as those are whom we call the creators, men, ideas, institutions, doctrines, and systems must be taken in relation to what went before them, and in relation to their own time.

Were a typical scholar of the last century to return to the earth, he could not fail to be surprised by the far greater range and compass that human thought has attained in every subject that relates to man or nature. Sometimes the vast accumulations of new knowledge are mentioned as the characteristic intellectual fact of the century; the truth is, however, that the new aspect under which knowledge is consid-

\* Discourses of Religion, pp. 294, 303.

† Life of Jesus, Chapter xxviii.

ered—the new attitude of the human mind to the materials upon which it works—is quite as remarkable. In natural history genera and species are no longer the rigid things that once they were. The lines that separate class from class and group from group are less tightly and straightly drawn; and in the room of the words “create,” “creation,” and “made,” “develop,” “evolution,” and “become” are used. In human history the hand of the evolutionist has rounded off the sharp corners and quick turns that the old writers made so prominent; transition has largely usurped the place of revolution; the new scholars glide gracefully around the easy curves; while epochs, eras, ages, and periods, although too important to be thrown aside, are used in senses that do not interfere with the wonted unity and continuity of history. Social organs and functions, like those of nature, grow and are not made; nay, some tell us that society itself is an organism. To discuss the new way of looking at things is no part of my purpose. The imagined visitant from the eighteenth century would soon discover that it does not explain, and does not assume to explain, the origin of things; it embraces only the movement when once it has begun. Still, having adjusted his mind to the new method, he could not fail to see that it has made the old artificial and mechanical theories of nature and history impossible to thinking men.

“On us a new light has come. I do not for a moment hesitate to say that the discovery of the Comparative Method in philology, in mythology—let me add in politics and history and the whole range of human

thought—marks a stage in the progress of the human mind at least as great and memorable as the revival of Greek and Latin learning. The great contribution of the nineteenth century to the advance of human knowledge may boldly take its stand along side of the great contribution of the fifteenth. Like the revival of learning, it has opened to its votaries a new world, and that not an isolated world, a world shut up within itself, but a world in which times and tongues and nations which before seemed parted poles asunder, now find each its own place, its own relation to every other, as members of one common primeval brotherhood.” \* So says a great historical scholar, who might, had it lain in his way, have also named ethics and religion as fields in which the new habit of mind has worked out important results.

“The present is the fruit of the past and the germ of the future. No work can stand unless it grows out of the real wants of the age, and strikes firm root in the soil of history. No one who tramples on the rights of a past generation can claim the regard of its posterity. History will disregard him who disregards her.” So says a distinguished church historian. †

The religion of a given country at a given time is relative to its whole mental attitude at that time, as Dr. Hatch tells us in a passage quoted in the last chapter.

It would be sheer forcing things even to intimate that

\* Dr. E. A. Freeman: *The Unity of History*. The Rede Lecture, read before the University of Cambridge, May 29, 1872.

† Dr. Philip Schaff.



Jesus used the Comparative Method. Still, we come upon frequent proofs, and decisive proofs, that He rejected the mechanical conception of the human mind, of life, and of nature, and that He always worked from the dynamical conception outward. Jesus is no exception to the law of development, either in Himself or in the method of His work. He had His antecedents and environments, both of which profoundly affected both the manner and the matter of His teaching. He stands indeed for a new era; but we can no more separate Him from what went before that from what came after. Let us therefore glance at some of these antecedents.

Those writers who deal understandingly with the subject lay great stress upon three factors in the preparation of the world for Christianity,—the Grecian philosophy and literature, the Roman jurisprudence and political organization, and the Jewish Law. The direct influence of the two first upon the Author of Christianity is slight, if indeed it be appreciable, but that of the third was very great. In the passage, “But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law,”\* the words “made under the law,” are equally significant with the words “made of a woman.” The whole passage marks, not merely the completion, and so the end, of an antecedent preparation of the world, but also the distinctive Jewish element that it contained. The influence of the Law upon Jesus, which is the topic now in hand, came

\* Gal. iv. 4.



through two channels,—one direct and one indirect.

The Mosaic law combined two kinds of elements,—the moral and the positive; or those that rested upon internal authority, and those that rested upon external authority. It was a body of moral and religious doctrine, as well as an objective political, ecclesiastical, and religious system. It abounded in both affirmative and negative commands. While Moses looked closely to the perpetuation of the Law, he assigned the sole public teaching function to the priesthood, and this function pertained more to rites and ceremonies than it did to the higher religious truths and duties. Moses provided a ministry of the letter that killeth, but not of the spirit that maketh alive. In time, however, there appeared a supplementary ministry that for many centuries supplied this lack. The reference is to the Prophets. While there was, an older prophecy, notably exemplified in Moses himself, the Jews were accustomed to say that Samuel was the first of the prophetic order. \* Since a living inspiration is the very life and soul of prophecy, the Law-giver was unable to establish a succession of prophets as he did of priests. The Jewish idea was that holy men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Still it must be said that at a later time there was something of an organization of that nature. The evidence of this is found in the “schools of the prophets” mentioned in several of The Old Testament books.

Very naturally, the priests, considered as teachers, and the prophets, moved on divergent lines. The

\* Acts iii. 24; xiii. 20; Heb. ii. 32.

priests emphasized ceremonial duties, ritualistic casuistry, the *ipsissima verba* of the Law; the prophets emphasized spiritual truths and ethical duties, and constantly strove to counteract the powerful legal tendency of the priests, and to spiritualize the national religion. Such familiar passages as the following are clothed with a new meaning when we discern that they are aimed at the very state of things which the priestly influence constantly tended to create :

Samuel.—To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. \*

David.—Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: Thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise. †

Micah.—He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? ‡

Isaiah.—Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. §

Still, so strong is the machine tendency in human nature, so much easier is it to offer sacrifice than to

\* 1 Sam. xv. 22.

† Chap. vi. 8.

‡ Psa. li. 16, 17.

§ Chap. i. 16-18.

render obedience, and so powerful was the sacerdotal organization, that the priesthood more and more prevailed, until at last prophecy came to an end altogether. "After the death of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, the last of the prophets," says the Talmud, "the spirit disappeared from Israel." Nor did it return until John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judæa.

Long before the prophetic lamp burned out a new light had been kindled. The Jews returned from the Captivity passionately attached to the Law. But circumstances had changed; what was once possible was possible no longer; and the new order that was now set up, was hardly more like the old order than the new Temple was like the old Temple. In fact, the more impossible it became fully to restore their ancient institutions, the more attached to them the Jews became. In these general circumstances originated the order that extinguished the prophets and eclipsed the priesthood. However, some further facts should also be mentioned. The original precepts of the Pentateuch alone were six hundred and thirteen, to say nothing of the far larger number of traditions that had gathered about them; they were now found in a dead language; while a large majority of the Jewish people were husbandmen, closely engaged in severe daily toil, and wholly incompetent to deal with the vast system of law and commentary that was extant in the time of Jesus. Hence the obvious truth, that the people were compelled to fall back upon the assistance of a class of professional men who made the

study of the Law and tradition the supreme business of their lives. These were the Rabbis.

It is probable that what in the Gospels are called "the traditions of the elders" and "the commandments of men," had begun to accumulate around the Law as a nucleus before the Exile; at all events, owing to lapse of time and changing conditions, such accumulations went on ceaselessly after that time, until at last they assumed permanent forms in the Talmuds.

How the facts now stated—the priests, the prophets, and the Rabbis conditioned the teaching of Jesus—is dealt with in other chapters. Attempts have been made to decry the originality of Jesus. Some have put forth the theory that seems almost to involve the generation of the teachings attributed to Him by the mere commingling of the elements of Grecian, Roman, and Jewish civilization. The theory is at war with the facts of the case; no teachings ever more plainly bore the unmistakable mark of an individual creative mind. Others have supposed that He borrowed ideas from the Buddhists, but Renan tells us that it is difficult to believe that a Buddhist influence could have reached Him. The claim advanced by some that His teaching was a mere eclectic system, borrowed from various sects and teachers of His time, Canon Farrar has thus forcibly set aside:

And from whom could Jesus have borrowed? From Oriental gymnosophists or Greek philosophers? No one, in these days, ventures to advance so wild a proposition. From the Pharisees? The very foundations of their system, the very idea of their re-



ligion, was irreconcilably alien from all that He revealed. From the Sadducees? Their epicurean insouciance, their "expediency" politics, their shallow rationalism, their polished sloth, were even more repugnant to true Christianity than they were to sincere Judaism. From the Essenes? They were an exclusive, ascetic, and isolated community, with whose discouragement of marriage, and withdrawal from action, the Gospels have no sympathy, and to whom our Lord never alluded, unless it be in those passages where He reprobates those who abstain from anointing themselves when they fast, and who hide their candle under a bushel. From Philo, and the Alexandrian Jews? Philo was indeed a good man, and a great thinker, and a contemporary of Christ; but (even if his name had ever been heard—which is exceedingly doubtful—in so remote a region as Galilee) it would be impossible, among the world's philosophies, to choose any system less like the doctrines which Jesus taught, than the mystic theosophy and allegorizing extravagance of that "sea of abstractions" which lies concealed in his writings. From Hillel and Shammai? We know but little of them; but although, in one or two passages of the Gospels, there may be a conceivable allusion to the disputes which agitated their schools, or to one or two of the best and truest maxims which originated in them, such allusions, on the one hand, involve no more than belongs to the common stock of truth taught by the Spirit of God to men in every age; and, on the other hand, the system which Shammai and Hillel taught was that oral tradition, that dull, dead Levitical ritualism, at once arrogant and impotent, at once frivolous and unoriginal, which Jesus both denounced and overthrew. The schools in which Jesus learned were not the schools of the Scribes, but the school of holy obedience, of sweet contentment, of unalloyed simplicity, of stainless purity, of cheerful toil. The lore in which He studied was not the lore of Rabbinism, in which to find one just or noble thought we must wade through masses of puerile fancy and cabalistic folly, but the Books of God without Him, in Scripture, in nature, and in life; and the Book of God within Him, written on the fleshly tables of the heart.\*

\* Life of Christ, Vol. I., pp. 87-89.



Jesus was the most original of teachers; but at the same time His teachings and institutions were historical outgrowths of what had gone before, and of what He saw around Him. In fact, His success depended upon such a relation; without it He must have failed. No teacher, not even the most creative, is absolutely superior to his times. Jesus was a Jew; furthermore, as a Jew he was an Oriental, and how significant this fact is we shall see in another place.

In the last chapter it was shown that much of the originality of Jesus consisted in expounding, elevating, and spiritualizing the Law. Still further illustrations of the same fact are here in point. Early in His career He declared that He had not come to destroy the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfill them. He implied a time when the Law, at least in its existing form, would pass away; but this would be by fulfillment and not by abolition. He came to fulfill the Law. The Evangelists caught the note, and often spoke of the Law and the Prophets as being fulfilled in Him.

Teaching by precepts may be thorough and effective, but it is slow, and reposes little confidence in the human mind. The constant assumption of the teacher who deals in precepts is, that men require to be told in every case, or at least in every class of cases, what to do and what not to do. Hence the "Thou shalt's" and "Thou shalt not's" of the Ten Commandments. Teaching by principles is something wholly different. The teacher assumes some insight and stability on the part of the pupil—assumes that he can make his own applications, for the

most part, when he is once put in possession of the principle. The difference between the two methods could not be more happily illustrated than they are by the Law and the Gospel, Moses and Jesus. Jesus was a consummate master of the art of seizing the principle behind the precept, and in reducing formal rules to unity. When the lawyer asked, "Master, what is the great commandment of the Law?" He answered: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." \* Thus did He reduce the whole Decalogue, in fact the whole Old Testament system, to two simple truths.

No better example of His method of expanding old ideas can be given than these very truths. He developed them out of current Jewish conceptions. His idea of the Father in heaven was the Jewish conception of Jehovah expanded, elevated, and brought into touch with human sympathies. The prophets had done something to universalize and refine the idea, but He completed the work. Jehovah was a national divinity; the Father in heaven belongs to the race. Beyond the conception of a God who causes the sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sends the rain on the just and the unjust, it is impossible for the human mind to go. Again, the old Jewish idea of brotherhood was also limited to the Chosen People. Here the prophets had also led the way in expanding

\* Matt. xxii. 34-40.

the idea, but Jesus pushed it to its limits, as before. The parable of the good Samaritan has probably done more than any other lesson of equal length ever spoken to break down mere regard for nation and order, and to bring in the conception of the brotherhood of man.

Once more Jewish history furnished Jesus the grandest of all His themes. If we take the Book of Daniel literally, it was in the midst of the disasters and humiliations of the Captivity, as well as at the culmination of Eastern power and splendor, that the vision of a kingdom of God first distinctly arose on the Jewish mind. "And in the days of these kings," said the seer, "shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."\* "It was," says Dean Stanley, "the first announcement of 'a kingdom of heaven,' that is of a power not temporal, with the rule of kings or priests, but (spiritual, with the rule of mind and conscience)—'cut out of the mountain without hands.' "† This was the beginning. As time wore on, and the national history became more and troubled, the prophetic vision became brighter and brighter. It became a distinct national aspiration, and was merged into the reign of the Messiah. The last of the Prophets repeated the promise,‡ and John the Baptist made it the burden of his preaching. "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," was his

\* Chap. ii. 44.

† History of the Jewish Church, Lect. xlii.

‡ Malachi iii. 1; iv. 2.

cry. Jesus also took up the call. He preached the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come." The vision that Daniel saw was a stone cut out of the mountain without hands; nevertheless the Jews transmuted it into the reign of a temporal military monarch. John associated it with repentance and reformation. Jesus made it the symbol of all His grandest ideas and inspirations. The stone was a kingdom of the spirit. "And when He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." \*

Thus the Law was fulfilled, not merely in the formal or promissory sense of abrogation, but in the fuller sense of a development or unfolding into something higher and better.

\* Luke xvii. 20, 25.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### HIS INSTITUTIONS.

THE main thought presented in the last chapter is still further illustrated by the history of the institutions that Jesus established. It is the thought of historical relation and continuity.

Jesus did not lay great stress upon institutions. He preached the Kingdom of God, but this kingdom was without observation and dwelt in men. Its main feature was its righteousness. Still, He realized that some sort of organization and co-operation were essential to righteousness, and this led Him to found the Church as the pillar and support of the truth. But here He kept as far as possible from formal and legal ideas, for He rested the Church upon a purely moral basis. It was the declaration of His own official character.\* Political and military founders, as well those who followed as those who preceded Him, would think this a very unsubstantial foundation. He builded better than they knew. Kingdoms that rest upon moral ideas may defy time and death, but those that rest on force are sure some time to come to an end.

Jesus was regardless of novelty or originality as such; nay, He knew full well that institutions, to be

\* Matt. xvi. 13-20.



useful and lasting, must be in touch with present ideas and feelings. The synagogue was centuries old; it had stood the test of time and usage; and so, following His usual method of borrowing and adaptation, He modeled the Church after it. The longer His course is scrutinized, the wiser will it appear to be. "Throughout the country, in town and village, increasing since the time of Ezra," says Stanley, "had sprung up a whole system of worship, which to the Pentateuch and the Prophets and the early Psalmists was unknown. The main religious instruction and devotion of the nation was now carried on, not in the Temple, but in the synagogues." He says further:

It is obvious how important a link this institution established between the Jewish settlements throughout the world. At Alexandria, at Rome, at Babylon, there was no Temple. But in every one of those cities, and by many a tank or river-side in Egypt, Greece, or Italy, there was the same familiar building, the same independent organization, the same house for the mingled worship and business of every Jewish community. And thus, inasmuch as the synagogue existed where the Temple was unknown, and remained when the Temple fell, it followed that from its order and worship, and not from that of the Temple, were copied, if not in all their details, yet in their general features, the government, the institutions, and the devotions of those Christian communities, which, springing directly from the Jewish, were in the first instance known as "synagogues," or "meeting-houses," and afterwards by the adoption of an almost identical word, "Ecclesia," "assembly-house!" \*

The imitation of the old society by the new one was extensive indeed, embracing its essential features both of organization and service. From an early time

\* History of the Jewish Church, Lect. 1.

had descended that democratic element which is so marked a feature of the ancient Church. In the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, Stanley tells us, "We stumble on the first distinct notice of that popular element which, deriving, in later times, its Grecian name from the Athenian assemblies, passed into the early Christian community under the title of *Ecclesia*—and thus became the germ of that idea of the 'Church' in which the voice of the people or laity had supreme control over the teachers and rulers of the society—an idea preserved in the first century in its integrity, retained in some occasional instances down to the eleventh century, then almost entirely superseded by the mediæval schemes of ecclesiastical polity, until it reappeared, although in modified and disjointed forms, in the sixteenth and following centuries." \*

The first mention of Christian ministers other than the Apostles and the Seven, is found in Acts xi. 30. The relief that was raised in Antioch for the Church in Jerusalem was sent to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. A more significant mention is met with a little later. † On their first journey into Asia Minor, Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in every city where they established churches. But these are by no means the first cases in which we meet the name in The New Testament. "Elder" is the title by which the rulers of the synagogue are commonly known in the Gospels. Considering the way in which Jesus denounced the Jewish elders, we might have imagined that the Apostles would choose another

\* History of the Jewish Church, Lect. xlv.

† Chap. xiv.

er name for the chief ministers of the local church. Nothing of the kind; the name is the only one in use in the first years of the Church, and was never wholly dropped.

As showing the extent to which the principle of conformity to existing forms and usages was carried, we may follow the history a little farther. When the time came for the Greek influence to assert itself, elder ceased to be an exclusive term. We now read of "bishops." The word is found only once in The Acts,\* but it is more characteristic of the pastoral Epistles than elder itself. To what cause are we to ascribe the introduction of the new word? Certainly not to the reorganization of the Church, or to a change in the duties of the minister. Nothing is more certain than that the elder, bishop, and pastor of the Primitive Church were the same officer. On this point the usage of language is decisive. No change of functions marks the introduction of the new name, although in course of time a change was made; on the other hand, the new word was due to the same principle that dictated the old one.

*Presbuteros*, "elder," was a title as familiar to the Jew as the name of the synagogue itself; and, should he find the old name given to a new officer, he would naturally suppose that the new society was like the old society, and that the new officer was expected to do work similar to the work that the old officer had done. To make choice of the word was merely consulting economy of time and mental force wherever Jewish ideas and usages prevailed. But to the Greeks

\* Chap. xx. 35.

*presbuteros* was merely a general appellative, having no special or official meaning. It would convey to them no specific or definite idea whatever. Accordingly, the same sense of fitness that, in the first case, had suggested *presbuteros* now suggested *episkopos*, "bishop." This word meant (1) one who watched over some charge, an overseer, a guardian; (2) a scout or watch; (3) a superintendent or *intendant* whom the Athenians placed over the subject states. The generic meaning of "watcher" or "overseer" well describes the office, but it is not improbable that the narrower political meaning was uppermost in the minds of those who brought in the new word. At least, the old word became less prominent when the special causes that made it significant ceased to exist, and a new word, which was more significant, was introduced. The two words, in their broadest meaning, suggest very different ideas. *Presbuteros* means an "older man," and names the officer with reference to his personal character; *episkopos* means a superintendent, and names him with reference to his functions. *Poimeen*, "pastor," follows the analogy of the second; it means a shepherd of a flock.

In view of these facts it is impossible to suppose that the Founder expected that the Church would retain a rigid, inelastic organization under all circumstances, or that its ministers would necessarily be known by the same names. This obvious adaptation to time and place implies that the objects of the Church, its spirit, and the duties that its officers are to perform, are of far greater consequence than its formal organization.



While much less elaborate, ceremonial, and ritualistic than the synagogue service, the Church service nevertheless has many points in common with it. The scriptural readings, the prayers, the sermon, the exhortation, the hymn, and the benediction of the nineteenth century all go back to the synagogue. The Jews were the authors of preaching. Here "we have the origin of the 'homily,' the 'sermon,' says Stanley,—“ that is, the serious 'conversation'—which has now struck so deep a root in the Jewish, the Mus-sulman, and the Christian communities that we can hardly imagine them to have existed without it.”\* The Greek intellect profoundly influenced both the form and the substance of Christian teaching; but the great outlines of the Christian Church were boldly traced in the Jewish development long before the Christian community began to exist.

No society can endure without ordinances. There must, at least, be a formal initiation. Jesus, although He placed a relatively low valuation upon positive appointments, recognized the necessity, and gave such appointments to the Church. And here again, at least in respect to the ordinance that finally marked the formal admission of the disciple into the spiritual society, He borrowed a rite that had long been in use, certainly in Judæa, and no doubt far beyond its borders. The Law had prescribed that the Jew who had become levitically defiled should baptize himself before offering sacrifice.† At a later day proselytes of righteousness, or proselytes of the covenant, were ad-

\* History of the Jewish Church, Lect. 1.

† Exodus xix. 10, 14.



mitted to full participation in the privileges of the Chosen People on condition of their being circumcised and baptized and offering sacrifice. Immersion in water was the formal acknowledgment of moral defilement that was thus symbolically washed away. Baptism had now become a recognized religious institution. The next step was taken by John: he called upon the whole nation to be baptized, and at the same time distinctly elevated the character and significance of the rite. "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." \* Henceforth water baptism was associated symbolically with moral regeneration. John also hinted that the rite should take on a higher significance. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." † When Jesus Himself submitted to baptism "to fulfill all righteousness," He gave the rite the most universal character. One of the Gospels informs us that He employed baptism Himself from the beginning of His ministry, or rather authorized His disciples to baptize the converts whom He had made. ‡ The exact significance of this baptism is nowhere pointed out, but it was perhaps accompanied with a profession of faith in Him as the Messiah. The commission marks the widest extension and loftiest meaning that baptism could attain. "Go ye, therefore, and

\* Matt. iii. 5, 6.

† John iv. 1, 2.

‡ Matt. iii. 11.

teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

The early history of baptism is shrouded in obscurity. Renan connects it with the ancient Sabianism, which he declares to have been a religion of frequent baptisms. "It is very difficult," he says, "to follow out these vague analogies. The sects floating between Judaism, Christianity, Baptism, and Sabianism, which we find in the region beyond Jordan during the first centuries of our era, present to the critic, from the confusion of the accounts which have come to us, the most singular problem. We may believe, in any event, that many of the external practices of John, of the Essenes, and of the Jewish spiritual preceptors of the time, came from a recent influence of the upper East. The fundamental rite which characterized the sect of John, and which gave him his name, has always had its center in Lower Chaldea, and there constitutes a religion which has been perpetuated to our day." \* According to Stanley, the Essenes, who came near to confounding cleanliness and godliness, were the first to recognize the rite as a universal one. This is his description:

"The badges of initiation were the apron or towel for wiping themselves after the bath, the hatchet for digging holes to put away filth. Some Churches in later days have insisted on the absolute necessity of immersion once in a life. But not only did the Essenes go through the bath on their first admission, but day by day the same cleansing process was undergone; day by day it was held unlawful even to name the name of God without the preliminary baptism; day by day fresh white clothes were put on; day by day, after the slightest occasion, they bathed again.

\* Life of Jesus, Chap. vi.

Down to the minutest points cleanliness was the one sacramental sign. The primitive Christians had their daily communion; the Essenes had their daily baptism. In the deep bed of the neighboring Jordan, in the warm springs and the crystal streams of Engedi, in the rivulets and the tanks of Jericho, they had ample opportunities for this purification which in the dry hills and streets of Jerusalem they would have lacked.\*

It is well known that water has had a most extensive cleansing and symbolical use in connection with religion, and particularly in the Orient. There is nothing strange in the fact that baptism should assume the place that it did in Jewish history. The important fact for us to note, as Stanley puts it, is that "the ordinance of baptism was founded on the Jewish—we may say the Oriental—custom which, both in ancient and modern times, regards ablution, cleansing of the hands, the face, and the person, at once as a means of health and as a sign of purity."† For Jesus to adopt the rite and adapt it to His purpose, was strictly in accord with His usual method of procedure; or, as the author just quoted remarks: "Here, as elsewhere, the Founder of Christianity chose rather to sanctify and elevate what already existed than to create and invent a new form for Himself."

It is equally obvious that the Lord's Supper and the Lord's Day are outgrowths of the Jewish passover and the Jewish Sabbath. The new institutions are changed in form and in meaning; but it is manifest that the distinctively Christian ideas have been developed from the older Jewish ideas.

\* History of the Jewish Church, Lect. 1.

† Christian Institutions, chap. I.

## CHAPTER IX.

### HIS AUTHORITY.

At the close of the Sermon on the Mount, as reported by Matthew, we read: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." And well might the people be astonished! Such sayings they had not before heard, such authority not seen. The nature and source of the authority that distinguishes Jesus so strongly from the Scribes constitute the subject of the present chapter.

And first, it will hardly do to state the difference between Jesus and the Scribes in this manner: He taught with authority, while they did not. The truth is that they did teach with authority, and a great deal of it. Jesus Himself recognized this fact, recognized, moreover, the authority itself. He said to His disciples: "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses's seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers." \* This is an unmistakable

\* Matt. xxiii. 2-4.  
(113)



recognition of the Rabbis as the official representatives of the existing system of teaching. The disciples were to do what they said, even to the extent of bearing the burdens that they imposed, because they sat in Moses's seat, the seat of authority. We must, therefore, search more closely to discover what it was that so widely separated Jesus from the Scribes. We shall find it in the kind of authority that they respectively exercised.

1. There is the authority of testimony. Every man of intelligence knows a multitude of things that transcend his own personal experience, as facts of science, travel, and history. He receives these facts either at first or second hand from those whom he regards as competent witnesses. Against authority such as this there is nothing to be said. It is plainly necessary to the progress of knowledge, if not indeed to its very existence. The point to be guarded is the character of the testimony to be received.

2. There is the authority of opinion or judgment. A man who has mastered a given subject becomes an authority in respect thereto, and on occasion renders expert opinions; a physician in relation to disease, a lawyer in relation to the law, a merchant or banker in relation to business matters. In such testimony as this, two elements blend—one of fact and one of inference or reason; and the value of the expert's opinion, supposing him to be honest, depends upon his acquaintance with the facts of the case and the soundness of his judgment. Plainly, this kind of authority is also indispensable in every practical walk of life. Children must depend upon the superior



knowledge and judgment of their parents and teachers, and the unlearned or unpracticed in any subject upon those who are learned or practiced. Pushed to an extreme, however, the authority of opinion becomes the source of great harm, as the history of science, morals, politics, and religion abundantly shows. It begets arrogance and oppression on the one part, weakness and slavishness on the other. No bounds can be set to its proper exercise, so much depends upon circumstances. In the religious sphere, its extreme exercise is the antithesis of soul-liberty. It is also to be observed that the authority of opinion and the authority of witness often blend; facts furnish the basis of judgment, while judgment is exercised in the acceptance of facts.

3. There is the authority of position or station. Reference is not now made to power over men's bodies, but to power over their minds. The authority of position is perhaps commonly accompanied by the authority of opinion, but by no means uniformly so. Weighty are the words that fall from the chair (*ex cathedra*). The words of a teacher, or of a physician, are sometimes accepted as valuable when they are worthless, merely because he is a teacher or a physician. So it is with the preacher and the judge—in fact, with everybody who holds a position of authority. While we cannot deny that this species of authority has a legitimate place, we should not fail to overlook the fact that it plays in the world a part greatly disproportionate to its value.

Authority in the academical sense is a blending of opinion and position. It centers in a person ulti-

mately. *Mallem cum Platone errare*, says the proverb. Time lends its powerful reinforcement. Age gives weight and dignity to a man, to an institution, to an opinion, to a faith, or system. The result is the establishment of a tradition, which derives its authority partly from its supposed author and partly from its age. This was the authority of the Schoolmen. Aristotle had legislated for philosophy, the Fathers for theology. When Scheiner, the monk who contests with Galileo the honor of having been the first to observe spots on the disc of the sun, told the superior of his order what he had seen, he received the solemn reply: "I have searched through Aristotle, and can find nothing of the kind mentioned: be assured, therefore, that it is a deception of your senses or of your glasses." \* Church authority was opposed to the discoveries of Galileo. It would be hard to measure the mischief that the principle of authority has worked in either science or religion, or to state in which sphere it has been the greater.

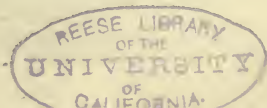
4. There is the authority of intuition. The word may not be well chosen, but I can think of none better. There is such a thing as an immediate insight into truth,—an insight that is not at least directly dependent upon the slow and laborious process of gathering facts and deducing conclusions from them. The proper field of intuition is the field of the spirit. It exists in men in very different degrees; but every man of real reason has something of it, has something that he holds as truth, the origin of which, in his own mind, he cannot fully explain, or which he

\* Fowler's Inductive Logic, p. 270.

cannot defend, except to say: "I see it to be so." Women are said to surpass men in such insight. Intuition has been the cause of vast harm to the world; at the same time, if men had refused to follow the great intuitive minds of history, there could hardly have been such a thing as progress.

The higher manifestations of spiritual intuition we call inspiration and revelation. These are exemplified in the Hebrew prophets. We do not think of Isaiah or Jeremiah as toilsomely thinking out his prophecies. They flash upon him—he sees them—he has a vision; he speaks the vision, he writes it, makes it plain; his book is the book of the vision. Wherein the vision of the prophet differs from the vision of the seer, has never been satisfactorily explained, and perhaps cannot be; we recognize the difference, but cannot fully analyze it. We say the range of the prophet is higher and broader; but if we have any spiritual discernment, and are not blinded by prejudice, we frankly acknowledge that the greatest of the seers have stood near to the border-land of inspiration.

Still another fact must be recognized: the intuitive perception of truth gives a man clearness and courage. The man who slowly thinks his way to a conclusion will hardly be able to divest his mind of the fear that he may have overlooked some fact, may have laid upon it too much stress, or have committed some other fault; but the man who *sees* is not similarly haunted. *Seeing is believing.* How clear and full the stream flows in The Old Testament prophets! We feel that they enjoyed an open vision of truth.



And it is in these facts that the authority of intuition, or, let us now say, of inspiration, originates. This fourth kind of authority may or may not stand alone. In some respects the authority of intuition is very like the authority of witness.

✓ With these thoughts before us, we shall have no difficulty in understanding the strikingly different impressions that Jesus and the Scribes made upon the minds of the Jewish multitude.

First, the authority of the Scribes was compounded of opinion and position. They sat in Moses's seat, and so spoke *ex cathedra*; they studied the Law, and the existing body of tradition, and so spoke with the authority of scholarship. "The wisdom of the learned men cometh by opportunity of leisure," says Ecclesiasticus, "and he that hath little business shall become wise." Their teachings lacked spontaneity—lacked freshness and vigor—lacked originality, freedom, and force; lacked indeed everything that can commend moral or religious discourse to the hearts of earnest men. They exemplified refinement and subtlety, endless analysis, inference, legal fiction, and splitting of hairs, much as the Schoolmen did centuries after. No doubt they taught some good maxims and enforced them; but on the whole a banquet at the table that the Rabbis spread was little more than a barmecide feast. "Narrow, dogmatic, material;" "cold in manner, frivolous in matter, second-hand, iterative in its very essence; with no freshness in it, no force, no fire; servile to all authority, opposed to all independence; at once erudite and foolish, at once contemptuous and mean; never passing a



hair's breadth beyond the carefully-watched boundary line of commentary and precedent, full of balanced inference and orthodox hesitancy, and impossible literalism; intricate with legal pettiness and labyrinthine system; elevating mere memory above genius, and repetition above originality; concerned only about priests and Pharisees, in Temple and synagogue, or school, or Sanhedrim, and mostly occupied with things infinitely small;" "occupied a thousandfold more with Levitical minutiae about mint, and anise, and cummin, and the length of fringes, and the breadth of phylacteries, and the washing of cups and platters, and the particular quarter of a second when new moons and Sabbath days began,"—such is Farrar's characterization of the teaching of the Scribes.\* Or to give Dr. Geike's summing up:

‘No wonder that when He had finished such an address, the multitude were astonished at His teaching. They had been accustomed to the tame and slavish servility of the Rabbis, with their dread of varying a word from precedent and authority; their cobwebbery of endless sophistries and verbal trifling; their laborious dissertations on the infinitely little; their unconscious oversight of all that could affect the heart; their industrious trackings through the jungles of tradition and prescription; and felt that in the preaching of Jesus, they, for the first time, had something that stirred their souls, and came home to their consciences. One of the Rabbis had boasted that every verse of the Bible was capable of six hundred thousand different explanations, and there were seventy different modes of interpretation current, but the vast mass of explanations and interpretations were no better than pedantic folly, concerning itself with mere insignificant minutiae which had no bearing on religion or morals. Instead of this, Jesus had spoken as a legislator, vested with greater authority than Moses. To transmit, unchanged,

\* The Life of Christ, Vol. I., pp. 286, 287.



the traditions received from the past, was the one idea of all other teachers; but He, while reverent, was not afraid to criticise, to reject, and to supplement. To venture on originality and independence was something hitherto unknown." \*

At every point Jesus opposed a bold contrast to the Rabbinical method. He was *not* as the Scribes. His authority borrowed nothing from opinion and nothing from position. There was in it no voice from the chair, no learning of the schools.

It was a blending of testimony and intuition. There is no delay or hesitation; no feeble reasoning or cautious inference; no trace of doubt or uncertainty. He spoke what He had seen in an open vision. His teaching was as spontaneous as new. His story about the spiritual world ran as freely as the tale of the traveler who returns from a distant land. He did not copy the Rabbis or use their dreary learning; He said nothing about Moses and the Prophets, but to expand and apply their teaching. Six times in the Sermon on the Mount He opposes to the current perversion of the Law, or to the tradition of the Elders, that impressive formula, "But I say unto you," with which the new era begins. There were in His teachings, as Farrar says, "no definitions," or "explanations, or 'scholastic systems,' or philosophic theorizing, or implicated mazes of difficult and dubious discussion. . . . Springing from the depths of holy emotions, it thrilled the being of every listener as with an electric flame. In a word, its authority was the authority of the Divine Incarnate; it was a Voice of God, speaking in the utterance of

\* Life and Words of Christ, Chap. xxxvii.

man; its austere purity was yet pervaded with tenderest sympathy, and its awful severity with an unutterable love." \*

It has been well said that, in the earlier time, prophets and righteous men looked for their guidance in times of religious need, not to a written book and its scholastic interpretation, but to a fresh word of revelation.† The history of the Chosen People justified this expectation. But after the time of Ezra the Jews had a dim sort of consciousness that the age of revelation was past, and that the age of tradition had begun. In time the Spirit wholly departed from Israel. Creative power, or spiritual originality, gave way to criticism and commentary. The difference between the prophet and the scribe was too unmistakable not to be felt. The teaching of Jesus revived the earlier period, and the authority that the multitude found in His words flowed from the demonstrative power of revelation.

Those are very significant passages in the Gospels in which men query whether the new Prophet were not an old one come back to earth. Some said He was Elijah, some Jeremiah, some one of the other prophets. There were even those who believed Him to be John the Baptist. Similar questions had been asked about John himself. Prophecy had become so completely extinct—the Spirit had so utterly departed from Israel—that it was apparently assumed by many that a new prophet was an impossibility. But there was no mistaking the decisive note that the

\* Life of Christ, Vol. I., p. 268.

† Smith: The Old Testament in the Jewish Church, Lect. VI.

Prophets, that John, and that Jesus all struck. It was the note of conscious power and of a Divine mission. This note it was that, most of all, made the men who heard the Master wonder and question who He could be. It constituted His authority, as it had constituted the authority of Moses and Samuel, and the long line of prophets who succeeded them.

Such was the authority of Him who spake as man never spake. It has been said of the Gentiles, that Christianity was helped forward by the current reaction against pure speculation—the longing for certainty. The mass of men were sick of theories. They wanted certainty. The current teaching of the Christian teachers gave them certainty. Something so it was with the Jews who heard Jesus gladly. They were sick of the Rabbinical scholasticism; they had thereby been led away from the personal trust that had constituted the primitive faith. They heard much about religion, and desired to see the thing itself; they longed to hear one who, like the Prophets, had had an open vision of truth, and Jesus met and satisfied the want. The sad thing about it all is that, notwithstanding the pains which He constantly took to fortify His disciples and forefend the Church which He founded, they have to a great degree repeated the old mistake.

In reflecting upon the passage that has suggested this chapter, we must remember that the standpoint of the men who heard the Sermon on the Mount was quite different from the standpoint of Christian believers who read that sermon to-day. Jesus was not

then invested with the authority that He now wields over the Christian mind. The present object is to explain the authority that the men who heard the sermon actually found in it, and not the authority that we may find, or that we ought to find, in it. I deal with facts, and not with views or theories. Still more broadly, the reader must remember that my aim is to explain some phases of the Master's character and teaching as they appeared to men who saw and heard Him, and not to explain the creeds or views of Christians in a distant century.

## CHAPTER X.

### HIS USE OF ACCOMMODATION.

This is one of Dr. Neander's titles. How suggestive and significant it is, how much of the philosophy of real teaching it contains, we shall see in part as we proceed with the topic. Those who desire a fuller view are referred to Neander's own treatment.

"When truth takes the form of mediating," says Dr. Lange, "it becomes teaching (doctrine). The teacher as such is a mediator between the light that is intrusted to him and the eyes of the spirit which he has to illuminate with this light. He must construct a bridge between the heights of knowledge and the low level of germinating thought. But as Christ is generally the Mediator between God and humanity, so is He also specially, as a teacher, the Mediator between the Divine counsels and human thought. He is the Teacher: this is involved in His whole character; this He proves by His ministry and operations." \*

Obviously any successful attempt at mediation between the truth on the one side and a human mind on the other, implies that the teacher shall make use of accommodation. An effort to communicate anything to a man in any language, as the Hebrew or Greek, is

\* Life of Christ, Vol. II., p. 172.



an act of accommodation. This is as true of a religious teacher as of any other teacher. It is in this spirit that The Bible speaks of the head, the arm, and the eye of God, and makes use of other anthropomorphic language. More than this, successful communication from God to man involves, on the part of His minister or mediator, the use of all our familiar laws and methods of teaching. As Dr. Neander states the case:

We must mention Christ's adaptation of His instruction to the capacity of His hearers, as one of the peculiar features of His mode of teaching. Without such accommodation, indeed, there can be no such thing as instruction. The teacher *must* begin upon a ground common to his pupils, with principles presupposed as known to them, in order to extend the sphere of their knowledge to further truths. He must lower himself to them, in order to raise them to himself. As the true and the false are commingled in their conceptions, he must seize upon the true as his point of departure, in order to disengage it from the encumbering false. So to the child the man becomes a child, and explains the truth in a form adapted to its age, by making use of its childish conceptions as a veil for it.\*

This was the more necessary, as the same writer points out, because it was not the purpose of Jesus "to impart a complete system of doctrine as a mere dead tradition, but rather to stimulate men's minds to a living appropriation and development of the truth which He revealed, by means of the powers with which God had endowed them." All His methods of teaching were chosen with this necessity in mind. The process of teaching is not in reality a process of imparting or conveying ideas and thoughts from one mind to another; it is, rather, as Socrates considered

\* Life of Jesus Christ, p. 113. N. Y., 1863.

it, a process of giving birth and development to ideas and thoughts already existing in germ and rudiment in the pupil's own mind. Or, to change the figure, it may be likened to the process of grafting; a new idea or truth is set like a cion in the stock of an old idea or truth. Accommodation assumes two different forms.

1. Intellectual accommodation. This recognizes the intellectual limitations of the pupil and strives to meet them. It is the selection of subject-matter and of methods of instruction with reference to his capabilities. It is a point where great scholars sometimes fail. For example, the late Dr. Andrew P. Peabody, in his "Harvard Reminiscences,"\* gives a sketch of Professor Benjamin Peirce, perhaps the greatest mathematician that our country has produced. He relates in a pleasing manner how he and Peirce, when young tutors, divided between them for a year the mathematical instruction given in the college. The following extract well illustrates how a teacher's very mastery of his subject may in a measure stand in the way of his success, even in dealing with college students:

He took to himself the instruction of the Freshmen. The instruction of the other three classes we shared, each of us taking two of the four sections into which the class was divided, and interchanging our sections every fortnight. . . . In one respect I was Mr. Peirce's superior, solely because I was so very far his inferior. I am certain that I was the better instructor of the two. The course in the Sophomore and Junior years, embracing a treatise on the Differential Calculus, with references to the calculus in the text-books on mechanics and

\* Pp. 182-184.

other branches of mixed mathematics, was hardly within the unaided grasp of some of our best scholars; and, though no student dared to go to a tutor's room by daylight, it was no uncommon thing for one to come furtively in the evening to ask his teacher's aid in some difficult problem or demonstration. For this purpose resort was had to me more frequently than to my colleague, and often by students who belonged for the fortnight to one of his sections. The reason was obvious. No one was more cordially ready than he to give such help as he could; but his intuition of the whole ground was so keen and comprehensive, that he could not take cognizance of the slow and tentative processes of mind by which an ordinary learner was compelled to make his step-by-step progress. In his explanations he would take giant strides, and his frequent "You see" indicated what he saw clearly, but that of which his pupil could get hardly a glimpse. I, on the other hand, though fond of mathematical study, was yet so far from being a proficient in the more advanced parts of the course, that I studied every lesson as patiently and thoroughly as any of my pupils could have done. I, therefore, knew every short step of the way that they would be obliged to take, and could lead them in the very foot-steps which I had just trodden before them.

This is an excellent illustration of a not unfrequent mistake. Over-estimating the pupil's ability, the teacher sometimes gives him too much matter, or matter that he is not capable of receiving in any quantity. Like Mr. Peirce, he says, "You see," "You see," when the pupil sees nothing but the rapid disappearance of the enthusiastic instructor in the distance. A "dropper" is a better instrument than a hose-pipe with which to fill a wine-glass.

It is interesting to observe how Jesus guards this point of danger. By selection of matter, by choice of methods, by repeating lessons in new forms, by varying illustrations, by explaining to the interested in-

quirer in private what has been said in public, by estimating the capability of the hearer and adapting Himself to it, He accommodates Himself to both the casual hearer and to the disciple who waits on His ministry. How significant to the experienced teacher are such passages as these: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."\* "With many such parables spake He the word unto them, as they were able to hear it."† Numerous are the intimations of His withholding truth until, by reason of fuller knowledge and larger growth, His disciples should be able to receive it. Nor are these intimations the least significant things in the story. He also fully recognizes the fact that not all hearers can accept His teaching. "All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. . . . He that is able to receive it, let him receive it."‡

Neander makes a very important distinction between what he calls positive or material accommodation and negative or formal accommodation. The first involves a yielding of substance, the second of form only. Positive accommodation cannot be defended on the ground that the end sanctifies the means. Such accommodation as this was utterly repugnant to the holy nature of Him who called Himself The Truth, and there is no trace of it in His teachings. But while He never sanctioned error, or taught it because it would be readily received, He never adopted the principle that all truth must be taught at all times, at all places, or to all persons. On the other hand, He fully recognized the principle

\* John xvi. 12.

† Mark iv. 33.

‡ Matt. xix. 11, 12.



of relativity or opportuneness. In respect to calling things their common names, to using words in their accepted acceptation, and to conforming to all the ordinary modes of speech, He allowed Himself the fullest liberty. To quote Neander again:

It is quite a different thing with the *negative* and *formal* accommodation. As Christ's sole calling as a teacher was to implant the fundamental truths of the kingdom of God in the human consciousness, He could not stop by the way to battle with errors utterly unconnected with His object, and remote from the interests of religion and morality. Thus He made use of common terms and expressions without entering into an examination of all the false notions that might be attached to them. He called diseases, for instance, by the names in common use; but we should not be justified in concluding that He thereby stamped with His Divine authority the ordinary notions of their origin, as implied in the names. Nor does His citation of the books of The Old Testament by the accustomed titles imply any sanction on His part of the prevalent opinions in regard to their authors. We must never forget that His words, as He Himself has told us, are *Spirit and Life*; and that no scribe of the old Rabbinical school, no slave to the letter, can rightly comprehend and apply them.\*

The fact that Jesus mentions a book called Isaiah, and quotes from it, proves that such a book was in use in His time; but it no more proves that Isaiah wrote the book in whole, or even in part, than the phrases, "the sun rose" and "the sun set," sprinkled so liberally over the pages of The Bible, prove that the sun does actually rise and set. There could not possibly be a greater mistake than to suppose that The Bible is written in scientific language. The truth is that no book in the world makes more liberal use

\* Page 114.



of the principle of intellectual relativity or accommodation.

2. Accommodation to the feelings. The importance of such accommodation, which professional pedagogists, to say nothing of practical teachers, do not always fully recognize, Jesus understood most profoundly.

First, He recognized and taught the fact that the acceptance of religious truth depends upon the moral disposition, or the spiritual tone of the hearer. He said: "If any man will do His will (or is *willing* to do His will), he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." \* "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." † These passages mean that acceptance of the teachings of Jesus depends upon a certain personal relation or adjustment to Him. Doing the will, or willingness to do the will, is a condition of knowing the doctrine; or, as that great preacher, F. W. Robertson, put the thought in the title of one of his sermons, "Obedience is the Organ of Spiritual Knowledge."

That Jesus makes this demand is sometimes urged as an objection to Him. "How can the personal relation of the hearer to the speaker," it is asked, "affect the truth or the reception of truth?" Abstractly, it is not so; concretely, it is so. The mental attitude of the pupil to the teacher is an important factor in all study, and particularly in those studies which have

\* John vii. 17.

† Ibid viii. 31, 32.

immediately to do with the direction of conduct or the shaping of character. Authority involves personal confidence, while willingness to see things through a writer's or actor's eyes, or a sort of sympathy with him, is essential to right interpretation. The construction that we put upon a man's words and acts, and therefore our view of the man himself, depends materially upon the state of our mind towards him, whether well disposed or otherwise. There is much more than poetry in the line,

Truths divine came mended from *that* tongue.

Speaking of literary appreciation and criticism, Carlyle has well said:

We have not *read* an author till we have seen his object, whatever it may be, as *he* saw it. Is it a matter of reasoning, and has he reasoned stupidly and falsely? We should understand the circumstances which, to his mind, made it seem true, or persuaded him to write it, knowing that it was not so. In any other way we do him injustice if we judge him. Is it of poetry? His words are so many symbols, to which we ourselves must furnish the interpretation; or they remain, as in all prosaic minds the words of poetry ever do, a dead letter: indications they are, barren in themselves, but, by following which, we also may reach, or approach, that Hill of Vision where the poet stood, beholding the glorious scene which it is the purport of his poem to show others.\*

But this is not all; there is still another fact that is more important for the teacher to see. There are three phases of consciousness, three forms of mental activity: knowing, feeling, and willing. While these are inseparably bound together, they are not all equally prominent in any state of consciousness. On

\* Critical and Miscellaneous Essays. "Goethe's Helena."

the other hand, any one of the three may be so strongly developed that we give its name to the whole state of the mind, as knowledge, feeling, or will. Still further, a very energetic development of any of them renders a very energetic development of either of the others impossible; a man cannot *know* and *feel* and *will* with great energy all at the same time. Now, gentle and pleasurable excitement of the feelings conduces to intellectual activity, and so to growth in thought and knowledge; while violent excitement, or a tone of feeling that runs strongly in the minor key, is a hinderance. As we all know by experience, certain emotional states render study and reflection impossible. Furthermore, the feelings that should reign in the school-room are courage, cheerfulness, gratification; not anger, grief, disappointment, or despair. Hence the regulation of the feelings of the pupil and of the school—the control of the emotional nature—is one of the delicate duties that the teacher is called upon to perform. How much wisdom there is in these words of a distinguished writer on psychology:

Those “strong-minded” teachers who object to these modes of “making things pleasant,” as an unworthy and undesirable “weakness,” are ignorant that in this stage of the child-mind, the will—that is, the power of self-control—is weak; and that the primary object of education is to encourage and strengthen, not to repress, that power. Great mistakes are often made by parents and teachers, who, being ignorant of this fundamental fact of child-nature, treat as willfulness what is in reality just the contrary of will-fulness; being the direct result of the want of volitional control over the automatic activity of the brain. To punish a child for the want of obedience which it has not the power to render, is to inflict an injury which may almost be said to be irreparable. For nothing tends so much to prevent

the healthful development of the moral sense, as the infliction of punishment which the child feels to be unjust; and nothing retards the acquirement of the power of directing the intellectual processes so much as the emotional disturbance which the feeling of injustice provokes. Hence the determination often expressed to "break the will" of an obstinate child by punishment, is almost certain to strengthen these reactionary influences. Many a child is put into "durance vile" for not learning "the little busy bee," who simply cannot give its small mind to the task whilst disturbed by stern commands and threats of yet severer punishment for a disobedience it cannot help; when a suggestion kindly and skillfully adapted to its automatic nature, by directing the turbid current of thought and feeling into a smoother channel, and guiding the activity which it does not attempt to oppose, shall bring about the desired result, to the surprise alike of the baffled teacher, the passionate pupil, and the perplexed bystanders.\*

The objections to violent disturbances of the child's feelings in school are two in number: First, he cannot learn while his mind is full of turbulence and excitement; secondly, such stimulus excites his moral nature to abnormal activity and growth.

How beautiful is the teaching of Jesus when measured by these criteria! How gently does He handle those whom He hopes to win! With what condescension and tenderness He treats the ignorant and those who have gone out of the way! With what forbearance and sympathy He looks upon the people! When He sees the multitude He is moved with compassion on them because they faint, and are scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd.† It is true that He sometimes denounces with terrific force; but His denunciations are heaped upon the leaders and rulers

\* Dr. W. B. Carpenter's Mental Physiology, pp. 134, 135.

† Matt. ix. 36.



of the people whom He has failed to awaken from their self-satisfaction or carnality, and whom it is necessary to expose, in order to destroy their influence. But the best examples of His spirit of accommodation are found in the history of His relations with His disciples. Their slowness to learn seems incredible, until we remember how remote His teaching is from the channels of the common Jewish mind. He is compelled to repeat His lessons, and to multiply illustrations. They have their Messianic ideas and hopes; they come finally to accept Him as the Messiah; still He is constantly dashing their expectations and frustrating their plans by pointing out to them their errors. Yet when He chides them He does so in gentle language. "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?"\* His strongest reproof to them was the words spoken after His resurrection: "Oh fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." And then, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounds unto them once more in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. †

\* John xiv. 9.

† Luke xxiv. 25-27.



## CHAPTER XI.

### HIS METHODS OF TEACHING. I.

EVERY true teacher stands between men and truth in a mediatorial capacity, and this was emphatically true of Jesus. He was the Truth, as well as the way and the light. In Him truth itself became a mediator. But this did not make method the less important, but rather the more important. Method now involved, not the means of intercommunication between men and abstract study or science, but between men and The Truth. In this case method may be less scholastic, but only because it is more vital and more practical.

The wise teacher always chooses his methods with reference to the ends that he wishes to accomplish. His ideas control his procedure. This is true of Jesus. His teachings look to a practical end; they lead to growth in knowledge and in grace. The conception of a completed circle of ideas, or of lessons that may be mastered by repetition and be conformed to by habit, is wholly foreign to His mind. He expects progress. The law of His kingdom is the law of development. "The earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." \* To effect His object He seeks

\* Mark iv. 28.  
(135)

to arrest the attention of men, to set them to thinking, and through their own mental activity to influence their characters and lives.

Dr. Neander finds in the words of Jesus, "Therefore every scribe, which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old" (Matt. xiii. 52), an intimation of the principles of His mode of teaching and the grounds on which He adopted it. "As a householder shows his visitors his jewels; exhibits, in pleasing alternation, the modern and the antique, and leads them from the common to the rare, so must the teacher of Divine truth, in the new manifestation of the kingdom of God, bring out of his treasures of knowledge truths old and new, and gradually lead his hearers from the old and usual to the new and unaccustomed." \*

"In discharging His office of Teacher," says Lange, "He employs various forms of teaching as they suited the various relations in which He stood to His hearers, and the inner constitution of these hearers themselves."† In general the stage of instruction that His hearers had reached, and their mental disposition toward Him, determined the method of discourse. If the men whom He addressed had already entered the circle of intimate discipleship, that was one thing; if they had not entered that circle, but were willing and eager to be taught, and so were well affected in their minds, that was another thing; if they were disputatious and captious, and particularly if they were hostile in spirit, that was still another thing; the same

\* Life of Jesus Christ, page 101.    † Life of Christ, Vol. II., page 173.

may also be said if they were indifferent and spiritually dull.

Whatever the moral status and attitude of those whom He was called upon to address, Jesus found all the pedagogical instruments that He needed already familiar to His countrymen. He invented nothing in method, but used old methods with perfect freedom and efficiency. His surprising originality appears in His mastery of these methods, in the spirit in which He used them, and in His subject matter. Perhaps nothing more completely marks His identification with the Jewish nation, nay more, with the Oriental world, than His adoption and exclusive use of the modes of teaching that were in constant employ about Him. What these methods were we are now to inquire.

1. The declaratory didactic discourse. Dr. Lange defines this as "the simple declaration or preaching of the Gospel, which accompanied the facts of the Gospel—such as the proclamation of the kingdom of God, of forgiveness of sins, the call to discipleship, the bestowal of a new name, or of power and authority, special promises, special injunctions,"\* etc. It will be seen at once that this is peculiarly a preaching method. It is the method that Jesus commonly used in the early part of His ministry, particularly in dealing with multitudes or large congregations. The long unbroken addresses found in the Gospels are examples. Particular mention may be made of the Sermon on the Mount, which is the greatest and best known of them all.

\* Commentary on Matthew, chap. xiii: "The Parables of Christ."

When we take up one of these sermons for examination, we soon see that it has a peculiar structure and texture. It is wholly unlike what now passes for a sermon. It often contains quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures, or allusions to them, but it is not our familiar expository discourse. It is not an argued or reasoned address. It does not, like the Greek or Latin orations, conform to the conventional rules for the construction of public addresses. It cannot be said to have a formal unity, and is scarcely a systematic treatment of a distinct subject. Learned commentators do indeed seek to discover underlying unity and system in these discourses; but their efforts are not very successful. In fact, it would be difficult to find any body of teaching or doctrine that shows less external trace of the system-maker than they do. Furthermore, this was due in great part to the internal structure of the sermon itself. What this structure was, we shall soon make the subject of investigation.

2. The didactic dialogue. Admirable as the declaratory discourse is when a speaker addresses a multitude, it is too formal and unwieldy for use when he deals with a single person or a few persons. A more familiar, direct, and confidential method is necessary. Under such circumstances, Jesus laid the sermon aside and took up the didactic dialogue. There are now two or more speakers, questions are asked and answered, difficulties are propounded and efforts made to remove them,—all of which gives to the teaching greater variety and animation. Reference may be made to the conversations with Nicodemus, Simon, and the woman of Samaria. This is the common



form of instruction when Jesus was dealing with his disciples. As Dr. Lange says, in the presence of His intimate disciples the dialogue "assumed the form of the most direct address, at once instructing the mind and moving the heart. So especially in the parting discourses of the Savior as recorded by St. John."

Some of the most characteristic teaching—some of the most interesting and beautiful—is given in this form. "Disciple" is a word that covers relations which "hearer" does not embrace. Particularly was this the case with Jesus. Many of His thoughts were so remote from the common mind, His lessons had applications so many and so various, that He often found it necessary to preach His sermons over again to His disciples, explaining what had been left obscure. More than this, He was fitting the Twelve for their ministry, and this made the private duty all the more urgent. He foretold His own death, pointed out what they would be called upon to suffer, and strengthened them with special promises. When we come to deal with the parables, we shall have occasion to consider one or more of these didactic dialogues. Still, the dialogue and the sermon have much in common, as we see when we look into their interior texture. The call to meet difficulties and answer questions in the dialogue required as plentiful a use of proverbs as the sermon itself. Such discussions often followed the more public teaching, and especially the parables. Remarking that the attainment of His end depended upon the susceptibility of the hearers, Dr. Neander observes:



So far as they hungered for true spiritual food, so far as the parable stimulated them to deeper thought, and so far only, it revealed new riches. Those with whom this was really the case were accustomed to wait until the throng had left their Master, or, gathering round Him in a narrow circle, in some retired spot, to seek clearer light on points which the parable had left obscure. The scene described in Mark iv. 10, shows us that others besides the twelve Apostles were named among those who remained behind to ask Him questions after the crowd had dispersed. Not only did such questions afford the Savior an opportunity of imparting more thorough instruction, but those who felt constrained to offer them were thereby drawn into closer fellowship with Him. He became better acquainted with the souls that were longing for salvation.\*

The second of these methods, under certain circumstances, passed readily into the third one.

3. Questioning or disputation. "When confronted by enemies and accusers," says Dr. Lange, "Christ adopted the method of questioning (disputation), following it up by a warning, or by what would serve to silence an opponent—the ultimate mode of dealing with such persons being either open rebuke or else solemn testimony." These disputations were controversial in form, and many of them were very searching in character. Many of the encounters between Him and the Pharisees and Sadducees may be given as examples. If one were looking for the surest evidence of Jesus's ability to hold His own in dealing with men, to overwhelm an opponent, to put to silence the captious, and to expose the pretentious and the arrogant,—he would find it in these contests. It is in the dialogues and disputations that Jesus approaches nearest to the Greeks. The dialogue with friendly auditors may be

\* The Life of Jesus Christ, p. 103.

likened to the Socratic maieutics, the disputation to the Socratic irony. The controversial dialogue, as well as the didactic dialogue, had certain elements in common with the sermon or declaratory discourse.

It was a foregone conclusion that Jesus and the Jewish teachers and rulers could not get on together. It is true that at first He did not denounce them publicly, or at all events that His most powerful denunciations belong to a later period. On their part they appear to have listened to Him, or to reports of Him, with wondering curiosity. Like the High Priest, the captain of the Temple, and the chief priests at a later day, they doubted whereunto this thing would grow. Some of them looked upon Him with no little favor. But the majority soon discovered that His teaching involved a subversion of the existing religious order; they were at first awakened and then alarmed, and they saw that something must be done to counteract His influence. One of the methods that they adopted was to ask Him "hard questions," to suggest difficulties, to file objections. Sometimes these grew immediately out of His teaching; sometimes they were made up with consummate art, care being taken to arrange the whole scheme beforehand. Never does He lose self-command, never is He taken unawares, never does He appear at a disadvantage. In every instance, He remains master of the field. Nor can it be said that the reports have been tampered with, for their verisimilitude attests their genuineness. A single example will suffice.

Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle Him in His talk. And they sent out unto Him their dis-

ciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us, therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not?\*

Observe the art with which the plot is laid and the characters are cast. The purpose of the Pharisees is to entangle Him in His talk, or, more definitely, to extort from Him an answer that will bring upon Him the enmity either of the nation or of the public authorities. They do not appear themselves, but send their disciples, in order not to arouse suspicion. Still further to veil their purpose, the actors address Him in flattering words; they call Him by the honorable title of Master; they tell Him that He teaches the way of God in truth, and that He does not regard the person of men. Will He therefore settle the vexed question of paying tribute? It must be remembered that the Jews were intense patriots, and were then chafing under the Roman domination; also that the Pharisees were national in feeling, as hostile as they dared to be to Rome and to everything Roman. The Herodians were not a religious sect, but a political party that took its name from the house of Herod. They were devoted to the family that was then reigning in parts of Palestine, and so to the Roman domination, upon which the fortunes of the Herods depended. The combination has been called one of priests and politicians, and it would be hard to say which party to it was the more unscrupulous and dangerous. The question of tribute was practically the

\* Matt. xxii. 15-22.

test of a man's relation to the existing order of things, the lawfulness of paying tribute, from a Jewish point of view, being not a little discussed. Now, if Jesus should answer the skillfully framed question in the affirmative, the Pharisees would certainly report among the people that He had ranged Himself on the side of the Romans; but if He should answer in the negative, the Herodians would denounce Him to the authorities as a political agitator and a dangerous man. Such were the millstones between which they hoped to see Him ground to powder. But, with His ready intuition, He perceived their wickedness, denounced them as hypocrites, and demanded to know why they should tempt or try Him. He asked to be shown the tribute money; and when they handed Him a *denarius*, He asked whose was the image and superscription stamped on the coin. They replied that it was Cæsar, the Emperor's. Seeing is believing; here was an object lesson teaching them what was, or whose was, the established political authority. The circulation of the *denarius* proclaimed the Roman supremacy as plainly as the eagles on the walls of Jerusalem could do. So when they had in effect answered their own question, He said: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." The scene was over. He had taught them three lessons: that the constituted authority was to be respected; that He was not an agitator dealing with political questions; and that men owe service and duty to God as well as to the State. He had so handled the case as to make it teach a great spiritual



truth. No wonder that the discomfited Pharisees and Herodians, when they heard these words, marveled and left Him and went their way. No wonder that we read at the close of a similar unsuccessful effort to entrap Him: "And no man was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions." \* This topic may be dismissed with the remark that never was the superiority of genuineness, simplicity, and truth over craft, artifice, and hypocrisy more clearly evinced than in the controversies and disputations of the Gospels.

Thus far we have been dealing with the methods of Jesus under an external or formal aspect. It will now become our duty to look into their interior structure. Dr. Lange says, however, that the silence of Jesus also "should be ranked among the forms of His teaching—viewing, as we do, each of them not merely as a speech, but as a fact."

\* Matt. xxii. 46..

## CHAPTER XII.

### HIS METHODS OF TEACHING. II.

THE last chapter dealt with the forms or modes of teaching that Jesus employed, viewed under an external aspect,—the formal didactic discourse, the didactic dialogue, and the disputation. We are now to take a deeper look into the subject.

Speaking of the first of these modes of teaching, Dr. Lange has said: “When addressed to a sympathetic audience, this declaration of the Gospel was delivered in a regular didactic manner in the form of maxims, or gnomes, as, for example, the Sermon on the Mount. The use of proverbs, gnomes, or sententious maxims, . . . was a favorite mode of teaching among the Jews, after the example of Solomon in the Book of Proverbs.” “The proverb,” he continues, “is a short, epigrammatic, pointed sentence, frequently figurative and concrete, occasionally paradoxical and hyperbolic, at other times poetical, but always vivid, and sharply outlined, so as to present in a transparent and significant form a deep, rich, and pregnant idea, which shines in the light of truth, and burns in the fire of personal application—bright and brilliant like a true gem.” A glance beneath the surface of the Sermon on the Mount, or of any similar discourse, suffices to

show that it consists, not of connected reasonings or of sustained argumentation, but largely of these expressive sayings, sometimes units separate and distinct in themselves, sometimes more or less connected, but all tending to awaken, to inspire, and to guide the hearer. Hence one of these discourses has a somewhat oracular appearance and effect. A glance, too, will show that such a mode of teaching would be wholly unsuited to any subject that demands scientific treatment. The facts and principles of science, history, mathematics, and philosophy cannot be compressed into maxims. At the same time it is a mode of teaching admirably adapted to the ends of practical ethics and of religious conduct.

Dr. Lange speaks of the currency of this mode of teaching among the Jews, and mentions Solomon. He might have given a far wider horizon to his remark. From a very early time, if not indeed from the earliest of which we have any record, the East has exhibited traits of mental character and modes of thought and expression that are not properly native to the West. Not merely the Jews, but the Arabs, the Persians, the Indians, and the Chinese have showed a decided propension to moral reflection, to prudential wisdom, and to gnomic or aphoristic utterance. What the ultimate sources or causes of these tendencies may be, I have not seen explained; for myself, I associate them with that air of repose and spirit of meditation which so strongly characterize Eastern life. They are tendencies quite inconsistent, for the most part, with the ceaseless energy and prac-

tical spirit of the West.\* Whatever the explanation may be, they are characteristic features of all the Oriental literatures. In Eastern books it is common to find the loftiest maxims and moral reflections in the mouths, not merely of sages and poets, but of tyrants, conquerors, and voluptuaries. As Alp Arslan, the Seljook Sultan, fell at the foot of his throne from the dagger of an assassin, he explained before he breathed his last: "In my youth I was advised by a sage, to humble myself before God; to distrust my own strength; and never to despise the most contemptible foe. I have neglected these lessons; and my neglect has been deservedly punished. Yesterday, as from an eminence I beheld the numbers, the discipline, and the spirit of my armies, the earth seemed to tremble under my feet; and I said in my heart, 'Surely thou art the king of the world, the greatest and most invincible of warriors.' These armies are no longer mine; and in the confidence of my personal strength, I now fall by the hand of an assassin."† It matters not whether the words are genuine or not, they are in perfect character. But we

\* This is Aristotle's famous characterization of the East and the West: "Those who live in a cold climate and in [Northern] Europe are full of spirit, but wanting in intelligence and skill; and therefore they keep their freedom, but have no political organization, and are incapable of ruling over others. Whereas the natives of Asia are intelligent and inventive, but they are wanting in spirit, and therefore they are always in a state of subjection and slavery. But the Hellenic race, which is situated between them, is likewise intermediate in character, being high-spirited and also intelligent. Hence it continues free, and is the best governed of any nation, and, if it could be formed into one State, would be able to rule the world. There are also similar differences in the different tribes of Hellas, for some of them are of a one-sided nature, and are intelligent or courageous only, while in others there is a happy combination of both qualities."—*Politics*, VII., 7.

† Gibbon, Chapter LVII.



cannot conceive of Cæsar's dying with a similar homily in his mouth. The combination of wisdom and profligacy found in Solomon is by no means an uncommon one in the East; and were we always to remember the peculiar moral genius of the Orient, the marked contradiction seen in the character of the Wise King would appear to us less extraordinary. It is no accident that from early times men have looked to the East for wisdom.

It is certain that wisdom and gnostic teaching did not originate with the Jews. Nor do they appear to have been prominent in the early history of the Chosen People. While anticipations are met with at an earlier date, the splendid outburst of Wisdom that shines so conspicuously in certain books of The Old Testament did not come until the age of Solomon. Such writers as Ewald and Dean Stanley connect this outburst with the great enlargement of the Jewish horizon and the general reign of peace that coincided with the reign of the Wise King. A new world of thought had been opened to the Israelites. The curtain which divided them from the surrounding nations was suddenly rent asunder. The wonders of Egypt, the commerce of Tyre, the romance of Arabia became visible. Prophets and psalmists now retire into the background, and their places are occupied by what is henceforth called "Wisdom," a word that must be taken, if we would understand its force, in a somewhat technical sense. We read of the "Wisdom of Egypt" and of the "Wisdom of the children of the East." Four renowned sages appear as its exponents. We read in

the First Book of Kings\* of Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol. We read in Proverbs of a House of Wisdom on seven pillars.† A class of men sprang up distinct from both priest and prophet bearing the name of "The Wise," whose teaching and manner of life were unlike that of either of those two orders. The thing and the name had been almost unknown before; but from this time forward the word occurs in the Sacred Writings at least three hundred times.‡

We cannot follow the Dean in his admirable analysis of Solomon's wisdom, except to say that he finds it to comprise discernment of justice and largeness of heart. But we are not to think of wisdom as peculiar to Solomon. While he exemplified it in its highest form, he nevertheless shared it with many of his contemporaries. It is in fact a kind of teaching in which the Eastern mind has always been fond of expressing itself. The Queen of Sheba did not come to Jerusalem from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear wisdom, but *the wisdom of Solomon*.

Again, as marking these large and interesting relations, Solomon expressed himself in common Oriental forms of speech. "The chief manifestation in writing of Solomon's wisdom," says Stanley, "was that of proverbs, parables, or by whatever other name we translate the Hebrew word *mashal*. The inward spirit of his philosophy (for such it might be called, and was the nearest approach to the Western idea which the Hebrew mind ever attained,) consisted in

\* Chap. iv. 30.

† Chap. ix. 1.

‡ See Stanley: History of the Jewish Church, Lect. XXVIII.

questionings about the ends of life, propounding and answering the difficulties suggested by human experiences. Its form was either that of similitudes or short homely maxims.”

Solomon cultivated science as well as wisdom. He spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even into the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.\* These studies the more fully qualified him for parabolic and gnostic expression. The East is the land of apologues, allegories, and fables. To use the whole round of natural objects as symbols of thought, and particularly trees and animals, is a habit dating from high antiquity. In the Orient, man seems to come into a close poetic sympathy with Nature, with the result that the natural symbols of ethical thought are here often used with admirable effect and grace.

I have said that gnostic thought and utterance were current in the East in Solomon's day. Stanley tells us that, “The climax of the definition of wisdom is ‘the understanding of a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.’” The kings and chiefs around seem to have been stimulated by his example, or by their example to have stimulated him, to carry on this kind of Socratic dialogue with each other. The Dean refers especially to the Wise King's contests in riddles with Hiram of Tyre. These are some of the riddles that were hurled back and forth in this game of royal wits: “What are the six things that the Lord hated?” “What are

\* 1 Kings iv. 33.

the two daughters of the horse-leach?" "What are the three things that are never satisfied?" "The three things that are too wonderful?" "The three things that disquiet the earth?" "The four things that are little and wise?" "The four things that are comely in going?" Not alone in The Old Testament, but also in other Oriental books, are riddles like these to be found. Solomon was not alone; it was his pre-eminence merely that led the Queen of Sheba to say: "Happy are thy wives, happy are these thy servants, who stand continually before thee and hear thy wisdom." Like so many others of the Oriental teachers, Solomon was also a poet. His songs were a thousand and five. He spoke three thousand proverbs.\* His pedagogical maxims circulate wherever his name is known. From this time on there was among the Jews a flowing stream of proverbial teaching, down to the time of Jesus. Some of this is preserved in The Old Testament, some in the Apocrypha, and some in the Talmud. Much of it is seen in books not outwardly proverbial, as in Job, the Song of Solomon, and in some of the Psalms, as well as in Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. The Apocryphal books called Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus are also books of proverbs. For the purposes of prudential conduct, it was a most effective form of teaching. "The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies." Here the reference is to the proverbial wisdom; and when we consider how well adapted this teaching was to impress the mind and to remain in the memory, we shall understand the figures.

\* 1 Kings iv. 32.



In making the large use that He did of the maxim or the gnome, Jesus was merely conforming to the habit of his country and age. As Renan puts the case: "Like all the Rabbis of the time, Jesus, little given to consecutive reasoning, compressed His doctrine into aphorisms concise and of an expressive form, sometimes strange and enigmatical. . . . The synagogues are rich in maxims very happily expressed, which formed a sort of current proverb literature. Jesus adopted nearly all this oral instruction, infusing into it a loftier meaning." \* We may therefore view Jesus under the aspect of one of The Wise. In fact the word personified is twice applied to Him in The New Testament. † To quote the Dean of Westminster again:

Not only was Christ the subject in which the name of The Wisdom of Solomon found its last and highest application, but His teaching was the last and highest example of the thing itself. If we look back to the older Scriptures for the models on which, in form at least, our Lord's discourses are framed, it is, for the most part, not the Psalms, nor the Prophecies, nor the Histories, but the works of Solomon. Not only do the short, moral and religious aphorisms resemble in general form the precepts of the Proverbs and of Ecclesiasticus, but the very name by which the greater part of His teaching is called is the same as that of the teaching of Solomon. He spoke in "parables" or "proverbs." The two Greek words are used promiscuously in the Evangelical narratives, and are in fact representatives of one and the same Hebrew word. It is, we might say, an accident, that the Proverbs of Solomon are not called the "Parables," and that the teachings of The New Testament are called the "Parables," and not the "Proverbs," of the Gospels. The illustrations from natural objects, the selection of the homelier instead of the grander of these, are not derived

\* Life of Jesus, Chap. v.

† Luke vii. 35; xi. 49.

from the Prophets, or from the Psalmists, but from the wise Naturalist, "who spake of trees, and beasts, and fowls, and creeping things, and fishes;" "of the singing-birds, of the budding fig-tree, of the fragrant vine." The teaching of Solomon is the sanctification of common sense in The Old Testament, and to that sanctification the final seal is set by the adoption of the same style and thought in The New Testament by Him who, with His Apostles, taught in "Solomon's porch," and expressly compared His wisdom to the wisdom which gathered the nations round Solomon of old.\*

These facts add interest to Jesus's own words: "The queen of the South shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon is here."†

Jesus grew up in an atmosphere charged with the gnomic wisdom. It was no doubt that form of teaching with which he was best acquainted. Dr. Geikie, in a pleasing but imaginary sketch of His youthful life at Nazareth, suggests that Joseph, like all Orientals, was given to speaking in proverbs and parables. "One sheep follows another," he might have said. "As is the mother, so is the daughter." "A man without friends is like the left hand without the right." "The road has ears, and so has the wall." "It is no matter whether a man have much or little, if his heart be set on heaven." "A good life is better than high birth." "The bread and the rod came from heaven together." "Seeking wisdom when you are old, is like writing on water; seeking it when you are young, is like graving on stone." "Every word you

\* Lect. XXXVII.

† Matt. xii. 42.

“speak, good or bad, light or serious, is written in a book.” “Fire cannot keep company with flax without kindling it.” “In this world a man follows his own will; in the next comes the judgment.” “With the same measure with which a man measures to others, it will be measured to him again.” “Patience, and silence in strife, are the sign of a noble mind.” “He who makes the pleasures of this world his portion, loses those of the world to come; but he who seeks those of heaven, receives also those of earth.” “He who humbles himself will be exalted by God; but he who exalts himself, him will God humble.” “Whatever God does is right.” “Speech is silver; silence is worth twice as much.” “Sin hardens the heart of man.” “It is a shame for a plant to speak ill of him who planted it.” “Two bits of dry wood set a moist one on fire.” All these are Jewish sayings, which Jesus may well have heard in his childhood. \*

It will be seen from the foregoing examples that, in the hands of the Rabbis, the proverb took on a harder and dryer form than in the hands of Solomon. Still fuller illustrations of the same fact may be found in the Book of Ecclesiasticus, as in chapter xxxviii.

Jesus did not adopt the gnomic form of teaching solely because it was so popular. Its adaptation to ethical teaching, as well as its non-adaptation to scientific teaching, have already been remarked upon. The proverb is by no means an exclusive possession of the Orient; but, wherever found, seizing, as it does, some sharp angle of truth, and expressing it in a terse and

\* Life and Words of Christ, Vol. I., pp. 182, 183.

pointed form, sometimes with paradox or exaggeration, it is a very effective form of didactic discourse. It holds the attention, it sticks in the memory. It was with reason that the greatest of all the teachers who used it, save alone Jesus Himself, compared it to the goad with which oxen are urged forward, and to the nail or spike driven by the builder of a house.

We cannot fail to see the great superiority of the gnomic teaching of Jesus to the similar teaching of those who went before Him. The wisdom of Solomon even was of a worldly, prudential nature, evincing discernment of judgment and largeness of heart in respect to man's worldly estate, but not rich in spiritual content or sounding the depths of the soul. Stanley calls it the philosophy of practical life. It is a sign, he says, "that The Bible does not despise common sense and discretion. It impresses upon us in the most forcible manner the value of intelligence and prudence and of a good education." It is this prudential quality that commends the Book of Proverbs so strongly to the practical man. The proverbial literature of the Jews was the only philosophy that the nation developed in ancient times. In the words of Schürer: "There is nothing that shows so clearly the practical character of the Palestinian Jewish literature of our period, as the fact that even in the merely theoretical speculations of the time there was always an eye to the practical aims and tasks of life. A theoretical philosophy, strictly so called, was a thing entirely foreign to genuine Judaism. Whatever it did happen to produce in the way of philosophy (wisdom) either had practical religious problems as its



theme (Job, Ecclesiastes), or was of a directly practical nature, being directions based upon a thoughtful study of human things for so regulating our life as to insure our being truly happy."\* Some of the Oriental nations have produced philosophers, but they commonly have this practical, prudential character. The wisdom of Jesus is of a far higher order. He touches heights and sounds depths that the Wise King never reaches; and this because He deals with the spiritual, and not with the merely prudential elements of life. Even Renan, who claims that Jesus appropriated the maxims current in the synagogues in His time, expressly declares that He infused into them a higher meaning. Nowhere in the Proverbs or Ecclesiastes, not to speak of other wisdom literature, will you find maxims to compare with the Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount. How hard and dry the maxims of even Solomon seem when brought into relation with these: "Blessed are the poor in spirit," "Blessed are they that mourn," "Blessed are the meek," "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness," "Blessed are the merciful," "Blessed are the pure in heart," "Blessed are the peacemakers," "Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake," "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake!"

No great discernment is needed to see that the gnostic sermons reported in the different Gospels differ somewhat among themselves. Those found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke are more practical, objec-

\* The Jewish People in the Time of Christ: Division II., Vol. III., pp. 23, 24.

tive, and matter-of-fact; -those found in John, more subjective, more ideal. The explanation is the well known fact that the Evangelists differed in capacity to receive and report their Master's teachings.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### HIS METHODS OF TEACHING. III.

JESUS impressed His personality on every form and mode of teaching that He used. It is impossible to mistake His touch. However, He is most widely known by His parables. These are even more characteristic than the gnostic sermons. We shall inquire, first, what the parable is; second, how it originated; and third, why Jesus used it.

While the numerous definitions of the parable vary in minute points, they are about the same in substance. Dr. Lange is content to call it a similitude, adding that under special circumstances Jesus extended the parable into the parabolic discourse, *i. e.*, a discourse which assumed the form of a parable or parables to which the interpretation was added. Dr. Neander says the parables are representations through which the truths pertaining to the kingdom of God are vividly exhibited by means of special relations of common life, taken either from nature or the world of mankind. Those parables which are derived entirely from the sphere of nature are grounded on the typical relations that exist between nature and spirit. Dean Alford says a parable is a serious narration within the limits of probability of a course of

(158)

action pointing to some moral or spiritual truth; and derives its force from real analogies impressed by the Creator of all things on His creation. The Dean quotes another writer who says a parable is a story of that which purports to have happened,—has not actually happened, but might have happened. Archbishop Trench does not give a definition, but distinguishes the parable, as other writers do, from the fable, the myth, the proverb, and the allegory. Into these distinctions we need not go; but may content ourselves with observing that the parable belongs to the kind of teaching called example, that it is an invented or fictitious example, not real or historical, that it is distinctly probable, is founded on some resemblance between nature and life, and looks to a moral or a religious end. It may be further remarked that the words *paroimia*, proverb, and *parabolee*, parable, are used interchangeably in the Greek Testament, and are representatives of one and the same Hebrew word. As Stanley remarks, the proverbs of Solomon might have been called his parables, and the parables of Jesus might have been called His proverbs. Still, we have no trouble in separating the two forms of teaching as they occur in the Gospels

In the East man seems to live in closer relations with Nature than in the West. He perceives poetic and ethical elements in her various objects that are but faintly revealed to the duller vision of his Western brother. In Oriental literature, plants and animals are used as instruments of teaching with wonderful effect and beauty—the fable, the apologue, and



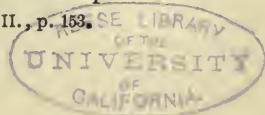
the parable. Admirably adapted as all these forms of teaching are to ethics and religion, they are even less capable of expressing scientific truth than proverbs. What could be more admirable, from the merely literary standpoint, than the apologue of Jotham, found in the ninth chapter of the Judges?

The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us. But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honor God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou, and reign over us. But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us. And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us. And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.

The parable was in familiar use in Judæa from the time of the Judges to the time of Jesus. The Rabbis used it constantly, although their parables are hard and jejune compared with those of the Great Master. Jesus was, therefore, familiar with this mode of teaching, and it was entirely natural that He should resort to it. Then, besides its adaptation to ethical and spiritual purposes, the parable is admirably adapted to that stage of human development when the mind feeds directly upon the stores of memory. It is a form of teaching that is even more likely to be remembered than the proverb; and it is not unlikely that the parables of Jesus have been more fully re-

ported by the Evangelists than any other form of His teaching. In fact, He used the parable with such extraordinary effect as to make it peculiarly His own. In the words of Renan: "It was especially in parables that the Master excelled. Nothing in Judaism had given Him the model of this delightful style. He Himself created it." The last statement, however, is not strictly true, except in the sense that He appears to have created the parabolic sermon.

In view of the evident adaptation of the parable to His use, it may seem strange that He did not use it from the beginning of His ministry. At least it is the fact that He did not. His earlier teachings were conveyed in declaratory discourses and in dialogues. He seems to have taken up the parable suddenly. It was in the presence of the great multitude gathered on the shore of the sea, as we read in Matthew xiii. Dr. Geikie supposes that its employment sprang immediately out of the meager results that had thus far attended His ministry. His past mode of teaching did not seem suited to the new circumstances. It had left small permanent results; and a new and simpler style of instruction, specially adapted to the dullness and untrained minds and hearts of His auditors, would at least arrest their attention more surely, and force them to a measure of reflection. "Pressing through the vast crowd to the shore of the Lake, He entered a fishing-boat, and, sitting down at its prow, the highest part of it, began, from this convenient pulpit, as it lightly rocked on the waters, the first of those wondrous parables in which He henceforth so frequently embodied His teachings."\* The parable of



the sower was the first one that He uttered; but from this time on He used this mode of instruction so frequently that we read: "But without a parable spake He not unto them: and when they were alone, He expounded all things to His disciples." \* As a teacher Jesus has ennobled and dignified the things of common life. He has shown that, for the ends of spiritual teaching, nothing is common or unclean. He struck this note in the parable of the sower. The imagery is furnished by the scene spread out before Him as He sat in the boat by the side of the sea; the sown fields, the grain in various stages of growth, the hard-trodden paths running through the fields, the stony places in which life made an unequal struggle, the thorns, and the deep, rich soil which produced grain in the greatest abundance. Dr. Geikie has thus portrayed the more striking features of the new mode of teaching:

Its characteristic is the presentation of moral and religious truth in a more vivid form than is possible by mere precept, or abstract statement, use being made for this end of some incident drawn from life or nature, by which the lesson sought to be given is pictured to the eye, and thus imprinted on the memory, and made more emphatic. Analogies hitherto unsuspected between familiar natural facts and spiritual phenomena; lessons of duty enforced by some simple imaginary narrative or incident; striking parallels and comparisons, which made the homeliest trifles symbols of the highest truths, abound in all the discourses of Jesus, but are still more frequent from this time. Nothing was henceforth left unused. The light, the darkness, the houses around, the games of childhood, the sightless wayside beggar, the foxes of the hills, the leathern bottles hung up from every rafter, the patched or new garment, and even the

\* Mark iv. 34.

noisy hen amidst her chickens, serve, in turn, to illustrate some lofty truth. The sower on the hillside at hand, the flaming weeds among the corn, the common mustard plant, the leaven in the woman's dough, the treasure disclosed by the passing ploughshare, the pearl brought by the traveling merchant from distant lands for sale at Bethsaida or Tiberias,—at Philip's court or that of Antipas,—the draw-net seen daily on the Lake, the pitiless servant, the laborers in the vineyards around—any detail of every-day life—was elevated, as the occasion demanded, to be the vehicle of the sublimest lessons. Others have uttered parables; but Jesus so far transcends them, that He may justly be called the creator of this mode of instruction.\*

What has been said will suffice for an external view of the parables. So far the subject presents no difficulties. The one hard question is now to be dealt with.

This one hard question suggests to our minds a number of phases. Why did Jesus use the parable from the beginning? Why did He at last introduce it? In what relation does its introduction stand to the progress of His ministry? What was His purpose, or what were His purposes, in introducing it? The one central question herein involved, the historians of Jesus and the commentators have treated at great length. It will be my purpose to state the difficulty and to suggest the answer, rather than to discuss the subject thoroughly.

There can hardly be a doubt that a great majority of the readers of the Gospels, on being asked the question, would say that they have obtained their clearest and most satisfactory ideas of Jesus's teaching from His parables. Neither can there be doubt that this

\* Life and Words of Christ, Vol. II., pp. 153, 154.



answer would represent the real facts. The inculcation of ethical truth is so dependent upon the use of similitudes, analogies, symbols—that is, the ethical use of Nature—and Jesus is such a consummate master of this mode of teaching, that the parables have long been looked to as the most effective teaching found in The New Testament. “Behold a sower went forth to sow;” “the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man which sowed good seed in his field;” “the kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed;” “the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven;” “the kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field;” “the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls;” “the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net cast into the sea;” “the kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king which would take account of his servants;” “the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder;” “a certain man had two sons, and he came to the first;” “there was a certain householder which planted a vineyard;” “the kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son;” “the kingdom of heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins;” “the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country;” “so is the kingdom of God as if a man should cast seed into the ground;” “there was a certain creditor which had two debtors;” “a certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves;” “which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight?” “the ground of a rich man brought forth plentifully;” “a certain man had a fig-tree planted in his

vineyard;” “a certain man made a great supper;” “if a man have a hundred sheep and one of them be gone astray;” “what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece;” “a certain man had two sons, and the youngest said to his father;” “there was a certain rich man which had a steward;” “there was a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linen;” “which of you having a servant plowing or feeding cattle;” “there was in a city a judge which feared not God neither regarded man;” “two men went up into the Temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican;” “a certain nobleman went into a far country to secure for himself a kingdom;”—the thirty parables introduced with these words do indeed present many points of difficulty to the interpreter, but they still hold up the one central object in lights so numerous, so varied, so striking, that even the dullest mind cannot fail to obtain instruction and inspiration from them. They are a kaleidoscope, exhibiting to the mind in the most effective manner the most important aspects of the kingdom of heaven. And still, they by no means exhaust the wonderful mastery that Jesus exerted over nature and common life for the purposes of ethical teaching.

Again, were the readers of the Gospels asked why Jesus made use of the parable, the majority would doubtless say that it was owing to its clearness and beauty as a mode of teaching. This is indeed a part of the answer, but only a part. Were this all, the parables would present no difficulty. But it is not all. Jesus had made use of similitude and analogy

from the beginning of His ministry, as in the Sermon on the Mount; but He takes up the parable with a suddenness that attracts the attention of every thoughtful reader, who asks at once, "Why not before?" "Why now?" The new mode of teaching made the same impression upon the minds of the disciples that it makes upon our minds, and led at once to a deeply interesting conversation between them and the Master.

One evidence that the parable of the sower was the first one that Jesus uttered, is the fact that the disciples, as soon as they could find an opportunity, came and asked Him, "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?"\* His answer discloses a double motive. While His main purpose was, as Trench states, "either to illustrate or prove, and thus to make clearer the truths which He had in hand," a "minor purpose was to withdraw from certain of His hearers the knowledge of truths which they are unworthy or unfit to receive." He tells His disciples that to some it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, while to others it is not given. He speaks to the second class in parables, because they do not see in seeing or hear in hearing, neither understand; for in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah in regard to grossness of heart, dullness of ears, and blindness of eyes. In the course of the conversation, He explains to them some of the deepest truths of the spiritual life. One of these is that the operations and results of the intellect are dependent upon the state of the heart; men spiritually deaf, blind, and gross

\* Matt. xiii. 10.

cannot hear, see, and understand spiritual things. The reception of the kingdom of God, like the reception of all other spiritual truth, is limited by the moral disposition. Still another lesson is that some spiritual knowledge is essential to the increase of knowledge. This is expressed in both a positive and a negative form, the second being strongly paradoxical. "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." The lesson is the same that is taught in the parable of the talents. The dread sentence, "Take therefore the talent from him,"\* is executed through the inevitable operation of spiritual law, and is in full accord with the profoundest educational philosophy. It is only through activity, or use, that any talent, gift, or power makes increase; and it is only through neglect or disuse that it diminishes and is finally lost. This is what the pedagogist calls the law of self-activity.

It is as plain that Jesus used the parable to obscure truth, as that He used it to illuminate truth. This is clearly implied in His own words. Why He should desire to obscure it, is a question that would lead us far deeper into the philosophy of spiritual things than we are prepared to go. It is by no means the only question of the kind that The Bible presents to our understanding. If mystery it be, it is one that often comes to our attention.

But, on the whole, the parables have contributed wonderfully to the moral and religious education of

\* Matt. xxv. 28.



✓ the world. They have entwined themselves around the hearts of men. They have become interlaced with the experiences of practical life. They have irradiated minds that otherwise were confused and dark. They have touched feelings that have responded to no other stimulus. They have set the most valuable truths in the clearest and most striking lights. They have energized feeble wills. Think for a moment of the mission in the world of the parable of the Good Samaritan, or of the Prodigal Son. Such being the case, we may at first be surprised that the parables should ever have been blocks of stumbling. But we must remember that light and darkness are relative terms, depending upon the point of view of the individual or of the age. Canon Farrar presents this view of the subject in a few sentences with which this chapter may fitly close.

To us, who from infancy have read the parable [of the Sower] side by side with Christ's own interpretation of it, the meaning is singularly clear and plain, and we see in it the liveliest images of the danger incurred by the cold and indifferent, by the impulsive and shallow, by the worldly and ambitious, by the pre-occupied and luxurious, as they listen to the Word of God. But it was not so easy to those who heard it. Even the disciples failed to catch its full significance, although they reserved their request for an explanation till they and their Master should be alone. It is clear that parables like this, so luminous to us, but so difficult to these simple listeners, suggested thoughts which to them were wholly unfamiliar.\*

\* Vol. I., pp. 323, 324.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### HIS RECOGNITION OF APPERCEPTION.

APPERCEPTION is comparatively a new word in the vocabulary of mental science; or, if not so, the stress that is now laid upon the thing for which it stands is new. We must seek to gain a clear idea of what the term means.

A child's mind at birth is not, as some philosophers have supposed, an inert and powerless substance, capable only of passively receiving impressions. It is not a ball of wax, a sheet of blank paper, a cabinet of drawers, or a block of marble. Ideas are not mere reflections of phases of the world, similar to pictures resulting from the exposure of human faces to the sensitive plate of the *camera*. The mind is power or energy, capable of action whenever it is brought into relation with the world; and our earliest ideas result from the establishment of such points of contact. From the moment that it begins to act, the mind begins to accumulate a store of materials, variously named "ideas," "images," "perceptions," "conceptions," "facts," "events," and "thoughts." To discriminate these terms would be far from my purpose, but we may say that a perception proper is an idea of an object known in itself, and that a conception proper is an idea of an object known in its rela-

tions. The one is a single or particular idea, and therefore concrete; the other is general, and therefore abstract. When once the mental current has set in, this store of material plays the most important part in its onward flow. We gain knowledge through knowledge; or, as one has said, "apperception means the grasping of new ideas by the aid of present similar ones. The child's perceptions," says this writer, "are not heaped up like dead treasures, but almost as soon as acquired they become living forces that assist in the assimilation of new perceptions, thus strengthening the power of apprehension. They are the contents of the soul that now permanently assert themselves in the act of perception. For wherever it is at all possible, the child refers the new to the related older ideas. With the aid of familiar perceptions, he appropriates that which is foreign to him, and conquers with the arms of apperception the outer world which assails his senses."\* And not the outer world alone, but the inner world as well. Thus, a girl two years old called a picture of spectral forms of women with floating garments, birds; cornstalks, trees; swimming swans, fishes, and mistook a flag that floated from the top of a house for a white horse. A child brought up in the South coming North called snowflakes butterflies. Similarly any child calls, or is likely to call, every man his papa, and every woman his mamma. Children six years of age taken to a zoological garden for the first time have been known to call buffaloes cows, ibexes goats, and tigers kittens. In this way the process of assimilation goes on by relating the new

\* Lange: Apperception, p. 55.

objects to the most closely related old ideas; only, as experience widens and judgment grows, we become more and more wary in referring new objects to familiar categories.

The word "object," as here used, must embrace ideas and thoughts. In learning we proceed from the known to the unknown; in thinking we can reason only from what we know. A distinguished authority has said: "When we know a new object we identify the object, or those features of it which were familiar to us before; we recognize it; we explain it; we interpret the new by our previous knowledge, and thus are enabled to proceed from the known to the unknown, and make new acquisitions; in recognizing the object we classify it under various general classes; in identifying it with what we have seen before, we note also differences which characterize the new object and lead to the definition of new species or varieties. . . . It is not what we see and hear and feel, but what we inwardly digest, or assimilate,—what we *apperceive*—that really adds to our knowledge."\* Thus, it is the inner eye that sees, and the inner ear that hears.

The rapidity of assimilation depends directly on the abundance of the mental store and the closeness of the resemblance existing between the new objects and the old ones. It is said that certain sailors persuaded a company of Esquimaux to sail with them to London. They anticipated much enjoyment in seeing the astonishment and admiration that the men of the North would exhibit when they were introduced to the wor-

\* Dr. W. T. Harris.



ders of the great city. Their astonishment was great when they saw the Esquimaux walking through the streets utterly indifferent to everything about them. Says the writer to whom I am indebted for the incident: "The explanation is simple. These inhabitants of the frozen North had no store of related predicates with which to interpret the wonders about them. We have no interest in that for which we have no understanding, no related concepts."\* One advantage that an educated man enjoys over an ignorant one is his greater store of images, ideas, and thoughts that facilitate the process of assimilation. The man who knows most can learn most; experience is a mental factor that nothing else can compensate for; and this is why the most intelligent people who visited the Columbian Exposition derived from the visit the greatest benefit, and why a scholar is the man who sees most in a great library. Thus, in science as in religion, to him that has is given, and he has an abundance. The case of the Esquimaux is in no sense strange, but what might have been expected. An American visiting the Orient, especially if he is ignorant, is at first confused, and perhaps even stunned, by the new life that he sees about him; everything is new and strange; he is not able to refer the new objects to old classes, or if he does he is compelled to correct his classification; the result being that he must begin, in a sense, his mental life over again and readjust himself to the world.

Still more, in the history of mental growth the will plays an important part. We must not liken the

\* De Garmo: *Essentials of Method*, p. 30.

mind to a magnet, which causes objects to cling to it; on the contrary, the will turns the intellect to this side and to that; it brings this and that object into relation to the knowing power; and it measureably removes from the field of consciousness what are deemed undesirable objects and undesirable ideas. Moreover, the feelings play their part; they furnish motives, contribute interest, and impart to ideas their own color. Very important is the influence that the tone of the mind exerts on the formation of individual ideas, and the general view that is taken of a subject or of the world.

There are numerous reasons why the application of the foregoing ideas to morals and religion is important. In the formation of moral and religious ideas, the feelings and the will are particularly potent. What Bacon calls their "suffusion" invades the domain of the intellect and puts out the "dry light" of reason. The affections and the will also are potent in the sphere of moral conduct, the will in truth holding the central place. Furthermore, scientific ideas, since they are so different, aid in the formation of spiritual ideas only indirectly; a fact, it may be remarked, which goes far towards accounting for the poverty of many intellectual men on the spiritual side.

We shall now look at some of the facts that we meet in the life of Jesus on which the doctrine of apperception throws a clear, strong light.

There was the woman of Samaria, who, when Jesus spoke of living water, could at first think of nothing but the water in the well, and at last was unable to

rise above the conception of water that should slake her thirst once for all, and so make it unnecessary for her to come to the well again to draw.

There was Nicodemus, who, when Jesus spoke of a second birth, could think of nothing but a new birth of the body. How can a man be born when he is old? Nor did the ruler succeed better when Jesus illustrated the birth of the Spirit by the blowing of the wind. Then there is a distinct recognition of the central idea in apperception in the question that Jesus puts to Nicodemus: "If I have told you of earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?"

There were the disciples, who made their way slowly in understanding the new ideas because they were so unlike the ideas that they had received from the current teaching and the current religious life; these were so formal, so material, and so legal that the profoundly spiritual truths which Jesus brought them were assimilated but slowly and imperfectly. When the Master spoke to them of His kingdom, they thought of a throne and a sceptre, and of a place at His right hand or at His left. A greatness that consisted in being a minister, and a chieftianship manifested in a life of serving, were conceptions that long passed their comprehension. Pedagogically speaking, Jesus used no small part of the time that He gave to their personal instruction in correcting their false classifications of His ideas; and they were never brought into true relations with Him until they saw a new meaning in the word "kingdom."

Finally, there were the Jewish people, upon whom

His teachings were largely lost because they really could not understand them. They believed in a Messiah to come; they believed that he would be like David, and the material elements of David's character had so excluded from their minds the spiritual element, that they thought the Messiah would be a temporal king, and they would have no other.

No teacher has more clearly seen how potent the state of the mind is in learning than Jesus. He deplores the hearts that are gross, the ears that are dull, the eyes that are closed; and blesses the eyes that see and the ears that hear. He uttered a profound truth, and one that reaches much farther than the immediate subject, when He said that whosoever should will to do the will of God should know whether the doctrine He taught was true. He understood perfectly why it was that the world knew Him not, and also why it was that His own, when He came to them, received Him not.



## CHAPTER XV.

### HIS USE OF THE DEVELOPING METHOD.

ON NOTHING do modern educationalists more pride themselves than on their so-called "developing method." It is, no doubt, the most valuable of modern contributions to educational progress. The following are its leading characteristics:

1. The fundamental fact in all mental life is the self-activity of the mind. To teach, or, more broadly, to educate, is to awaken and direct this activity. You cannot put facts and ideas into a child's mind as you can put marbles into his pocket; his mind is not a box or storehouse that can be mechanically filled. Nor can you convince a man of any truth or proposition by merely loading him with arguments; his mind is not a pair of scales that inclines this way or that way according as the heavier weights are thrown into this or that scale-pan. A child can acquire facts and ideas only through his powers of perception and apperception, and a man can be convinced of a proposition only as he thinks out, or, what amounts to the same thing, weighs the arguments that go to prove its truth. All that you can do for the child or the man is wisely to select and skillfully to present to his mind the ideas, facts, and arguments in question.

2. Due respect must be paid to the order of mental growth; instruction must be graduated to the ability of the mind to receive and to assimilate it. Babies cannot digest strong meat, and men cannot live on milk. Then, as we saw in the last chapter, what the pupil already knows is the most important factor in learning what he does not know. The more he knows, relatively speaking, the more he can learn; and for the reason that the larger his store of facts, ideas, and thoughts, the more rapidly and completely can the process of apperception go on. The larger the lump of leaven that is put in the meal, the more quickly will the whole be leavened. The man who has read most books finds most to interest him in a library, and the man who has seen most of the world is the most appreciative traveler. Still further, one thing leads to another, both in respect to the features of single objects and in respect to combinations of objects. Hence the current teaching maxim, to proceed from the known to the unknown.

3. In the presentation of any subject, free use must be made of objects, examples, and illustrations, and especially in the early stage of mental progress. In particular will the skillful teacher of abstract subjects, such as moral and religious truths, search out analogies between the natural and the spiritual worlds.

These ideas are in no sense new; the developing method is the method of the human mind; it is as old as teaching itself, and all that modern educators can fairly claim is that they have thought out these ideas more clearly than the ancients, that they have given

them a more systematic form, and that they have applied them more consistently and on a larger scale. No teacher has more fully met these conditions than Jesus; some of them He has stated in terms, and all of them He has illustrated in practice.

First, it is His constant endeavor to stir the mind to vigorous action; to enlist the intellect, the feelings, and the will. Hence His rejection of all mere traditionalism, formalism, and mechanism; hence His efforts to get men out of their ruts and routine into a vigorous and healthy spiritual life. No teacher has more clearly seen the difference between the acceptance of a dogma or the performance of a rite, and real faith. He demanded, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" \* and He followed up the question with the declaration that the hearer and the doer of the Word is like a man who builds his house on a rock, while he who hears and does not do is like a man who builds on the sand. The distinction is so fundamental that to miss it reveals an incapacity to deal effectively with moral and religious training. Precepts are directed to the intellect, while spiritual life flows from the heart. It is very generally assumed that formal moral teaching is the greatest factor in moral training, whereas it is the least factor. It is a mistake into which moral and religious teachers are peculiarly liable to fall.

Secondly, Jesus fully recognizes, both in theory and in practice, that there is an order or growth in grace, as in nature. "For the earth bringeth forth fruit of

\* Luke vi. 46.

herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.” \* How far a progress of doctrine can be traced in the Gospels as a whole, is too large a question for these papers; but we shall nowhere find better examples of a wise and skillful leading of the mind from thought to thought than Jesus has furnished.

Thirdly, He also recognizes that the contents and state of the mind play an important part in the growth of knowledge and of grace. This is the great lesson of the parable of the talents.† The man to whom five talents were given, and the man to whom two, are commended because they have been faithful in what has been entrusted to them; and the man to whom one was given is condemned because he has not been faithful. The great lesson is that of use or activity. The Lord says to the unfaithful servant, “You ought to have put my money to the bankers; and at my coming I should have received back my own with interest.” His sentence is, “Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him that hath ten talents.” The talents of increase that are given to the two faithful men, and the talent of capital that is taken from the unfaithful man, are not given and taken by the arbitrary command of superior authority. The giving and taking are alike the results of the operation of a law that is as wide as human nature. Faculties that are exercised or used increase in power, while those that are not exercised or used waste away and are finally lost. This is the law that doubles the capital of the two men, and that

\* Mark iv. 28.

† Matt. xxv. 14-30.



takes away the capital of the third one. "For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." The conclusion is the more emphatic by reason of the paradox that is involved in the final clause. The words are Jesus's formulation of the pedagogical law, that action leads to increase of power, and inaction to the waste and final loss of power.

- ✓ Fourthly, no teacher has surpassed Jesus in the use of illustrations drawn from nature and common life. He had more than the Oriental insight in detecting the analogies that exist between material and spiritual things. There has appeared in the world no greater master of the art of illustrative teaching. This is a fact that continually presses upon the man who studies the four Gospels.

- ✓ We shall search in vain for a better example of skillful teaching than the conversation of Jesus with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well.\* As He, weary with His journey, sat on the well about noon-day, while His disciples were gone into the town to buy food, the woman, according to the Oriental custom that has doomed women to this hard service, came to draw water. He was a Jew, she a Samaritan; and between the two nations the enmity was so bitter that the common commerce of life was rarely carried on. The statement of the Evangelist is, "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." He was thirsty from heat and exercise, but His great object, no doubt, was to draw the woman into conversation.

\* John iv. 5-30.

He asked her for water to drink. Surprised, she asked how it was that He, a Jew, asked drink of her, a Samaritan. He makes no answer to this question; more intent on the woman than on the water, He replies, If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that asks you for water to drink, you would have asked of Him and He would have given you living water. The deeply significant words mean nothing to her; she is fully absorbed by the water lying at the bottom of the well and the means by which it must be raised to the surface; and so she says, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. From what spring do you have this living water of which you speak? Are you greater than Jacob, who dug this well, and drank of it, himself, his children, and his cattle? No impression has been made upon her hardened mind, and the Master tries again: He who drinks of the water in the well shall thirst again; but he who drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, for it shall be in him a well of water rising into everlasting life. The woman's interest now begins to kindle, but in a manner that plainly shows how darkened is her mind. She thinks, perhaps, of the long succession of women who, from the time of Jacob, have come to this well with pitchers attached to a long cord to draw water; she thinks certainly of the many visits that she herself has made for this purpose; she desires to be released from the painful drudgery, and so she says: Give me this living water, that I shall thirst no more, and so shall no longer be compelled to come here to draw. Plainly, she is still thinking of the water, so cool and refresh-

ing, in the depths of the well; she feels no need of the water of life. Perceiving that He has failed to reach His purpose through the ideas which He has thus far used, Jesus now approaches the woman on quite another side: Go and call your husband, and come here. She replies that she has no husband. Jesus says to the woman: You have well said that you have no husband; you have had five husbands, but he whom you now have is not your husband; you have told the truth. The poor woman, beginning now to discover what had thus far been hidden from her vision, replies: I see that you are a prophet. A truth that she has wholly failed to perceive while it was wrapped up in the beautiful discourse about spiritual things that has since delighted multitudes, is revealed to her through His knowledge of a prosaic fact in her own history. Desiring to make the most of her opportunity, she appeals to Him to settle an old question between her people and His people. The Samaritans worshiped in Mount Gerizim, while the Jews said that Jerusalem was the place where men ought to worship; would He please to settle the controversy? His reply, which ranks among the noblest of His utterances, will engage our thought in another chapter. But it leads the woman to say, I know that Messiah, when He comes, will tell us all things. To which He replies, I that speak unto you am He.

All in all, the Gospels contain no more instructive and beautiful discourse than this one; and it is the more noteworthy because it was spoken to a Samaritan, and to a woman of doubtful character, and because it illustrates how a truth that has failed to

enter a human heart through a high door sometimes enters through a low one. Apparently, Jesus might have discoursed to the woman of the water of life for hours, and made no impression, while a fact about herself, and one that is by no means creditable to her, effects the purpose. How permanent or lasting the impression was, we cannot say; but for the time, at least, she was lifted above the absorbing cares of her daily material life.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### HIS RECOGNITION OF MORAL PERSPECTIVE.

BY PERSPECTIVE, in the literal sense of that term, we understand the art of making such a representation of an object, or a group of objects, upon a plane surface as shall present precisely the same appearance that the object itself would present to the eye situated at that particular point. This art involves seeing the several parts of the object, or of the group, in their true relations, as they exist in nature, and then in fixing these parts and relations on paper. By moral perspective, we understand bringing the various moral factors or elements into such a conspectus as shall show them to the mind as they really are in themselves, and in their relations to one another. It implies a normal view of the moral world, or of some considerable part of it. It involves, therefore, a sound standard of moral measurement, and its judicious application to the facts that the view combines. And this, again, requires the possession, on the part of the one applying the measure, of experience, observation, and justness of mind.

While the ability to see the moral world in proper perspective is of great value to every person, it is absolutely indispensable to the equipment of a moral



teacher; apart from personal character it is, in fact, the most essential part of him. We shall try Jesus by this criterion. The best way to set forth His unequaled merits in this relation will be to consider Him in connection with certain tendencies of human nature, and particularly in contrast with teachers of His own time and country.

Man's tendency to routine and habit is very strong. Habit both saves and enlarges power, and is absolutely essential to man's strength and efficiency, physical, mental, and moral, but it has its unpleasant compensations. One of these is that it tends to narrow the mind, or to give intension at the expense of extension. Habit tends to become a test of truth, a standard of right and propriety, beyond what is reasonable; hence, the enslavement of custom, the tyranny of fashion. It tends to destroy spontaneity and freedom, and to dry up the very fountains of the emotional life. It appears in the field of morals and religion. It is indeed essential there, since a man without moral and religious habits is a man without moral and religious character. Religion is also peculiarly spontaneous, since free thought, free spirit, and free activity are of the very essence of true religion. Without habituation, that uniformity of faith and practice which is essential to all co-operation could not exist, to say nothing of well regulated and orderly life; with an excess of habituation, freedom of individual opinion and belief is suppressed, the energy of individual and social activity diminished, and the slavery of a dead uniformity established.

Habituation is the foundation stone of theological

systems. It is the mainstay of lifeless ritualism and ceremonialism. It is the sanction of tyrannous ecclesiastical organizations. Nothing else is so fatal to genuine religion and spirituality on its subjective side. Certain nations of the Himalaya Mountains, it is said, construct praying machines and mills. They first select an eligible site by the side of some stream, where they set up a water-wheel, and connect it by a belt with a cylinder that is adjusted to revolve on an axis; they place in the cylinder some prayers written on bits of paper or other material, and consider that at every revolution of the cylinder every bit of paper utters a prayer. And who shall say that some Christian practices are more reasonable or more religious?

The wide prevalence of the machine tendency in religion is due, of course, to the ease and cheapness with which the machine runs, compared with the great expenditure of power that genuine religion calls for,—intellectual, emotional, and practical. The ancient Jews, for example, found it far easier to come before God with burnt offerings, with calves, with rams, and oil than they did to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before God; far easier to tread His courts, to bring oblations, to burn incense, to observe new moons, Sabbaths, and feasts, to call assemblies, to spread forth their hands, to make many prayers than they did to wash them, to make them clean, to put away the evil of their doing, to cease to do evil, to learn to do well, to seek judgment, to relieve the oppressed, to judge the fatherless, to plead for the widow.

How carefully Jesus guarded His system on this side, all who are readers of the Gospels know full well. He made a good life His ideal. He laid a minimum of stress upon rites and ordinances, and a maximum of stress upon moral teaching. He disregarded the formal and merely intellectual aspects of teaching, and strove to purify and energize the heart through faith and love. He insisted upon personal faith, personal obedience, and personal consecration. No teaching can be found in which the energy of the individual soul plays a more important part than in His teaching; properly speaking, it plays the only part. "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." \* The idea that there is, or that there can be, a family religion, or a national religion, in any sense that does not involve the individuals who make up the family or the nation, has no place in The New Testament. More than this, He seeks to safeguard His disciples against the peculiar weakness of the Mosaic system. He, more impressively than any other teacher, has laid His finger on the weak spot in all religions,—their tendency to formalism, to distortion of moral truth, and so to spiritual death.

We need not deny all truth and virtue to the Rabbis, but the principal questions that occupied their minds were the rights of priests, the dignities of teachers, the proprieties of the synagogue, the width of phylacteries, the forms of tradition, the rating of tithables, the length of prayers, and the ecclesiastical

\* Matt. xxiv. 40, 41.



cases that arose out of the application of the ancient law and the ever-growing commentary to the events of life. But this was not the worst. The energy that a man can give to religion is practically a fixed quantity, at least at any given time; and if he gives this energy to *minima* he cannot give it to *maxima*. The man who is long absorbed in little things loses the power, if he ever had it, to grasp large things; the great and the small are equalized to him; they exchange places; the great are disregarded or forgotten. Such are some of the distortions that follow. A man whose mind is fixed upon the weightier matters of the law may attend to the lighter, but the converse proposition is negatived both by experience and by the laws of the human mind. The Jewish Rabbis who so scrupulously tithed mint, anise, and cummin, thereby incapacitated themselves for observing justice, mercy, and faith.

Still further, the exaggeration of the little involves practical disregard, as well as theoretical disregard, of the great. That is a sound instinct in human nature which leads us to suspect serious defects of character or life in the man who is excessively scrupulous in regard to minor matters. Experience proves that there is a causal relation between the petty tithings of the moral life and its grave obliquities, and psychology gives us the reason. Men who pay tithes of mint, anise, and cummin by habit, omit the weightier matters of the law by habit. He who makes long and ostentatious prayers, naturally devours the widow's house; and he who is anxious to appear out-

wardly righteous before men, becomes filled with hypocrisy and iniquity.

A few of the many illustrations that Jewish history furnishes of the sad consequences which flow from defective spiritual perspective, have been given above. Equally impressive, and more numerous, illustrations could be drawn from Christian history. How logical conceptions and creeds displaced the primal Christian faith; how opinion crowded out conduct and the creed life, has already been remarked upon. These changes involved enormous loss of spiritual power. The doctor stood to the new development in the same relation that the rabbi had stood to the old development. As the rabbi had said that salvation depended upon the attenuated traditions of the elders, so the doctor said that it depended upon the equally attenuated definitions of the councils. The rabbi had wholly lost sight of things important in his absorption in things unimportant; so the doctor. The rabbi had suffered the people to be scattered as sheep having no shepherd, while he tithed his mint; so the doctor. The rabbi had sometimes fallen into gross wickedness while paltering about jots and tittles; so the doctor. It is hard to say which one is the greater offender; but before we conclude that it is the rabbi, we should at least remember that he had a legal and ceremonial system to begin with, while the doctor began with an ethical system.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### HOW HE HANDLED CASES.

THE teacher's privilege to ask questions has its compensation in the duty to answer questions. It is a compensation that may subject him to the severest strain which he encounters. A weak man, or even a charletan, may for a time maintain himself in monologue, or even in dialogue, if he be permitted to ask all the questions, but he can not long hold his own if his auditors have full liberty to question him and to criticise his replies. The ability to ask questions is of a high order. The skillful question, Bacon said, is the half of knowledge (*prudens quaestio dimidium scientiæ*,) and the other half is the ability to answer them. The two are not necessarily combined, but in combination they are extremely effective. Witness Socrates, who proved himself alike formidable in both relations.

The questions that arise in morals are of two kinds, scientific or abstract, ethical or practical. To answer the first calls for speculative thought; to answer the second, for practical wisdom.

Again, the same question may be answered in different ways, and yet be rightly answered. First, it may be answered in the terms or within the limits of

the question itself, without any statement or intimation of reasons why the answer is given. This is authority to the one who seeks guidance. Such an answer has only an immediate present value, since it applies only to the question directly in hand and to those that are like it. Here the answer is the only thing. Secondly, a reason may be assigned, but only within the limits of the question at issue. Such answers are better than the former ones, but they are still narrow and unsatisfactory. The answer is now the main thing. Thirdly, the answer may dispose of the pending question, and of all similar questions; nay, more, it may irradiate the whole subject-matter to which it relates, the whole field or tract of conduct and life, with light and truth. Now the case is not a single one. Furthermore, the question is lifted out of its own category to be considered in the light of principles, and to be answered with reference to the broadest relations. The particular question or case is lost sight of in whole or in part. It is remembered at most as the question that called forth the utterance of some deep thought, some broad truth, some far-reaching principle.

Manifestly, we have here an excellent gauge of the mental power of a teacher. The first class of answers mark the small man, who answers single questions without reasons in their own narrow terms. Those of the second class mark the broader man, who gives reasons, but reasons that are limited to the case or the class of cases. While the third class marks those luminous intelligences that grasp truth in its broadest relations, and who think it more important



to set forth a rule or principle than to settle the case immediately in hand. In fact, there are but few better measures of a man than the way in which he answers questions. It is a measure that we are now to apply to Jesus.

Ranking as a Rabbi, and commanding, as He did for a time, the deference of the multitude—a teacher of authority—Jesus was naturally resorted to by those who wished Him to interfere in the settlement of practical questions. Such a case we have in Luke xii. 13-15. “And one of the company said unto Him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.” The case is brought before us in its leading features in an instant. A man had died, and a controversy had followed in relation to the distribution of his property, which Jesus was thus importuned by one of the claimants to settle. His answer, “Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you,” is an affirmation that He does not sit as an administrator on dead men’s estates, or as a judge to adjudicate the rights of property. While His mission will, in the end, reach and influence such cases, it is immediately concerned with matters of far greater importance. But He improves the occasion to utter one of the profoundest truths. “Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.” The man of small mind under such circumstances would have been content to waive jurisdiction of the case. Jesus found an opportunity, in addition, to deliver a special admonition to the

complainant, and to assert the superiority of the spiritual to the natural life. It is one of the lessons of the Temptation in a new form. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

A somewhat similar case is found in Matt. xix. 16-22 and in Mark x. 17, "And behold, one came and said unto him," (or, as the parallel passage runs, "There came one running, and kneeled to him,"—such was his apparent eagerness), "Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" After telling the man that God is the only good one, Jesus adds: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Asked what commandments, He particularizes: "Thou shalt do no murder; Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false witness; Honor thy father and thy mother; and Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The young man said unto Him, "All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet?" On his making this reply Jesus, beholding him, loved him. And yet the Master perceived that one thing the young man lacked. "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me." This was the *experimentum crucis*; when the young man heard it "he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions." Jesus had revealed the questioner, the seeker after guidance, to himself; with all his correctness of formal life, he still loved his wealth. But still more, Jesus made the occasion a pulpit for

another of his far-reaching thoughts: "A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven."

A different case is found in Matt. xxii. 23-33. Certain Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of the dead, came to Him with a question by which they hoped both to show the impossibility of the resurrection, and to confound and put Him to silence. They began with citing Moses, who taught that if a man should die, leaving no children, his brother should marry his widow, and raise up children to his brother. "Now there were with us seven brethren," they said: "and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother. Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven, for they all had her." A more ingenious puzzle than this they could hardly have produced. It bears evidence of service in the theological controversies of the two leading Jewish sects. It reminds one of the ingenuity of the logical puzzles of the Greek schools, although it relates to very different subject-matter. With one masterful stroke Jesus disposes of the question, and teaches the spirituality of the other life. "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Nor is He satisfied with disposing of the case, and asserting this great spiritual truth, and thus by implication telling them that they are wrong in their dispute with the Pharisees. He follows up His advantage: "But as touch-

ing the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Thus the futile attempt to ensnare Him in a puzzle led to the forcible assertion of the spirituality and immortality of man. Again we read: "And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine." Also that "the Sadducees were put to silence."

Still another example will be given. The conversation held at Jacob's well, which led the woman of Samaria to the discovery, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet," has a far profounder meaning than as an illustration of the developing method. There was an old and bitter controversy between the Jews and the Samaritans as to the relative merits and claims of Mt. Moriah and Mt. Gerizim. Jerusalem had become the capital of David. On the Holy Mountain Solomon had built the first Temple, and on the same summit all subsequent temples and restorations had been made. To every pious Jew, the place was hallowed by centuries of history and by a thousand associations. The royal poet had but voiced the national inspiration when he sang:

I was glad when they said unto me,  
Let us go unto the house of the Lord.  
Our feet are standing  
Within thy gates, O Jerusalem;  
Jerusalem, that art builded  
As a city that is compact together:  
Whither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord,  
For a testimony unto Israel,



To give thanks unto the name of the Lord.  
For there are set thrones for judgment,  
The thrones of the house of David.  
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:  
They shall prosper that love thee.  
Peace be within thy walls,  
And prosperity within thy palaces.  
For my brethren and companions' sakes,  
I will now say, Peace be within thee.  
For the sake of the house of the Lord our God  
I will seek thy good.

And if possible the flight of time had only added to the intensity of feeling. Never were men more strongly attached to a shrine than the Jews were to Mt. Zion. But in the days of Nehemiah, Sanballat had built a rival temple on Mt. Gerizim, and there organized a rival priesthood and worship. This temple had been destroyed two hundred years before the time of this conversation; but the Samaritans still resorted to the old seat of piety to pray and to sacrifice, and we are told that even to-day the few Samaritans residing in Naplus, the ancient Sychar, call Gerizim a holy mountain, and turn their faces to it in prayer. With the place, too, is associated an ancient form of the Pentateuch. The Jews regarded the claims of the Samaritans in behalf of Gerizim as preposterous and even impious. They looked upon its temple, its priesthood, and its worship as a profane mimicry of the Temple, the priesthood, and the worship of Jerusalem. Hence arose a dispute which was an important factor in the refusal of the Jews to have dealings with the Samaritans. But on two cardinal points the Jews and the Samaritans agreed. They

both believed that religion was a national matter, and both looked upon worship as affected by locality. To the Jew, Jehovah was the God of the Jews, not of the Gentiles, or of the Samaritans. To the Jew, the holiest services were strictly localized. Solomon had built the Lord a house. Daniel had prayed with his face toward Jerusalem. In captivity the Jews had sung:

By the rivers of Babylon,  
There we sat down, yea, we wept,  
When we remembered Zion.  
Upon the willows in the midst thereof  
We hanged up our harps.  
For there they that led us captive required of us songs,  
And they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying,  
Sing us one of the songs of Zion.  
How shall we sing the Lord's song  
In a strange land?  
If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,  
Let my right hand forget her cunning.  
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,  
If I remember thee not;  
If I prefer not Jerusalem  
Above my chief joy.  
Remember, O Lord, against the children of Edom  
The day of Jerusalem,  
Who said, Rase it, rase it,  
Even to the foundation thereof.  
O daughter of Babylon, that art to be destroyed;  
Happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee  
As thou hast served us.  
Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones  
Against the rock.

But much more was involved in the matter than sentiment. The Jewish worship, consisting largely of fleshly ordinances, could be conducted only in a house

with suitable appointments of an elaborate description. Moreover, this worship, as well as the national faith itself, was a most precious national inheritance. We may imagine, therefore, the depth of feeling with which the Jews looked upon the Samaritans' challenge of the exclusiveness of Jerusalem.

The moment the woman perceives that she is talking with a prophet, she suggests rather than asks, the old question. She says: "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye [that is the Jews] say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." He does not answer her question directly, and yet He far more than answers it. Jesus saith unto her:

"Woman, believe me. The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

It is very certain that the woman did not see far into this reply; indeed, she may not have thought that she had been answered at all; and it is impossible that all disciples of Jesus living to-day understand its full import. We shall first glance at some of the things that the answer does not mean.

First, Jesus does not mean that the time should come when this particular woman should worship in neither of these seats of ancient piety. Neither, secondly, does He mean that in the future her country-

men, the Samaritans, should not worship in these places. Nor, thirdly, does He assert that Jerusalem and Gerizim shall be deserted; and still less, that they should become impossible or unfit places for worship. He makes no allusion to the woman or to the Samaritans. He lays no interdict on either of the old temples. To put any one of these meanings into His mouth, would be to lose His thought, to misunderstand the nature of the dispensation that the hour is ushering in, and to fall below the level of the occasion.

He means, rather, that the question about Gerizim and Moriah has lost its interest, because these places have been equalized, one with the other, and with all other places; that Jewish exclusiveness is at an end; that the Temple at Jerusalem ceases to be more holy than any other place; that the days of localized worship and of fleshly ordinances are gone, and that a genuinely spiritual worship is at hand. More than this even, He means that the old ethnic religions and national faiths shall now make room for the one true religion and faith that is as broad and free as the soul of man. The dispensation of the letter gives way to the dispensation of the Spirit. Moses makes room for Christ. An end is put to all constraint and compulsion. God is spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. Accordingly, since that day any spot in the wide world—the depths of the mine, the heart of the forest, the top of the mountain, the seclusion of the closet, the privacy of the fireside, and the bosom of the sea—is as acceptable a place of worship as the grandest church or the



most glorious temple. Everything depends upon the instructed mind and the earnest heart. The act consecrates the place, not the place the act. The woman's question was answered; but it was answered by being taken up into the most elevated and comprehensive principle that marks the kingdom of God.

Many other examples could be given. These, however, suffice to show the consummate ability that Jesus manifested in dealing with men and in putting controversialists to silence; and also how He lifted questions and cases up to the level of great principles, and made them occasions for the impressive and telling assertion of central religious truths.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### HIS SEVERITY.

FALSE ideas of the character of Jesus, both as a person and as a teacher, are not uncommon. They arise by excluding from view certain elements or factors that belong to Him. Furthermore, the elements that are thus excluded are generally of the same class. His common mode of address is so winning; His benedictions fall so delightfully upon the ear; He is so tender in His invitations; so interested in the multitude; so full of compassion for the poor and ignorant; so patient with the dull and slow-minded; so anxious to bring back to the right way those who have strayed from it; He is so kind and gracious,—that we sometimes forget that He also turned to the world another and very different side, or, if we do not forget the fact, we underestimate its importance.

There are two classes of moral qualities, which may be generally described as the harder and the softer, the more rugged and the more gentle, the stronger and the more gracious. Under the one category we bring courage, truth, justice, and righteousness; under the other, compassion, purity, tenderness, and innocence. The first give character its firmness and permanence; the second, its grace and loveliness. It would be too

much to say that the qualities put in the two classes are opposed each to each. There is no opposition, for example, between strength and purity, but rather the reverse. Sir Galahad's strength is as the strength of ten *because* his heart is pure. At the same time the two groups of qualities do present an antinomy more or less complete.

There are justice and compassion. Justice demands that men shall fulfill the law; Compassion condones the offences of those who do not. Justice shuts her eyes and holds aloft her symbolic scales; Compassion weeps at the misery and suffering which she sees around her. Justice lays judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet; Compassion has neither line nor plummet, and knows not their use. Justice sometimes sends men to prison; Compassion opens prison doors and bids prisoners go free. Justice often condemns; Compassion always pities. In an absolute sense the two qualities cannot be harmonized, and in practice one must often give way to the other.

The man who is merely just may command our respect and admiration, but he never calls out our affections and sympathies. He dwells in a region too cold for those flowers to bloom. The man who is merely compassionate may draw out our affections and sympathies, but he will not command our full respect and admiration. He dwells in an atmosphere too warm for the hardier plants to grow.

The harm that has been done by men of these opposite types is very great. Those of the first type sometimes discourage and crush human beings, be-

cause they will permit no relaxation of the law; the others encourage men to grow up weak and dependent, because they refuse to permit them to come into relation with the law. The first say the discipline of life comes through our learning that we must reap what we sow, and that the only way to learn this invaluable lesson is to reap our own harvests; and that, therefore, it is a great mistake to intervene between the sufferer and the consequences of his own foolish or inconsiderate act. The second say that experience is a dear school, that her discipline is hard to bear, and that the law should not be allowed to do her strange work. The conflicts of the two principles make up no small part of the moral life of the world. The prophet prayed, "In wrath remember mercy." In The New Testament we read of the acceptable will of the Lord; also of the day of vengeance of our God. But the Psalmist wrote of a delightful state or period in which mercy and peace should meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other; \* and we are led to seek for the common ground on which this reconciliation is effected. The answer to this question is, benevolence or love. Benevolence does not ask primarily what is just or what is merciful, but what is best, what will promote good or well-being. She wishes men well, and seeks to realize her wish. Justice declares that a man now lying in prison shall remain there, because this would be just; Mercy says he should be released, because this would be merciful; Love says that should be done which, taking all facts into account, will be for the best, because we should be benevolent.

\* Psalms lxxxv. 10.



The sterner and the milder traits meet and blend in the perfect character. The man who realizes the ideal is both just and compassionate; neither word, however, sums up his character; love alone does that. But even this word is unfortunately abused; it is sometimes understood in the sense of mercy; whereas, it looks only to the true end or good of men.

These observations bring us to a class of passages in the life of Jesus that offer a striking contrast to the Beatitudes, and to the invitations addressed to the weary and heavy-laden. Such a passage is that recounting how Jesus found in the Temple those that sold oxen, sheep, and doves, and money-changers; and how, first making a scourge of cords, He drove them all out together—men, sheep, and oxen—poured out the changers' money, and overthrew their tables, protesting that His father's house should not be made a house of merchandise.\* Here we see His moral indignation rising to a white heat. Still we miss much of the effect if we forget that the Jesus who wields the terrible scourge is the same Jesus who teaches His disciples the Lord's prayer, and looks upon the multitude with tenderest compassion.

Another such passage is the address that Jesus poured out of his burning heart upon the Scribes and Pharisees, following their final discomfiture in argument, as related in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew. Canon Farrar justly calls it "The Great Denunciation;" and we shall not find its equal elsewhere in literature. Beginning with the declaration, "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses's seat,"

\* John 11. 13-17.

he rushes on through a series of woes, the most terrific that were ever pronounced upon men. They do all their works to be seen of men; they shut up the kingdom of heaven, neither entering themselves nor suffering others to enter; they devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers; they compass sea and land to make one proselyte, who, when he is made, is tenfold worse than themselves; they are blind guides, misleading the people with respect to oaths; they pay tithes of mint, anise, and cummin, and neglect the weightier matters of the law,—justice, mercy, and faith; they make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but are full of extortion and excess; they are whitewashed sepulchres, which are clean without, but within are full of dead men's bones and of uncleanness; they build the tombs of the prophets, garnish the sepulchers of the righteous, and yet testify that they are the children of them which killed the prophets,—thus He pours over them the torrents of this terrific denunciation until, as if to remind us that He is still the same Jesus who spoke the Sermon on the Mount and the parables, He closes with the lament: "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." \*

These passages suggest reflections that are practically instructive.

1. We should not fail to observe the conditions under which Jesus turned His severe side towards

\* Matt. xxiii. 13-39.

men. It was not when He was addressing the poor, the ignorant, and the weak, but when He dealt with the wicked, the rich, and the strong.

In the first instance, the sellers of sheep, oxen, and doves, and the money changers, choked up that part of the Temple precincts called the Court of the Gentiles; the abuse was an inveterate one, carried on with the knowledge, and even in the interest, of men in high ecclesiastical position; the house of prayer was made a den of thieves, which conduct in a Jew was more profane than it was for a Pagan soldier to sprinkle the sanctuary with swine's broth. The very Temple was filled with the tumult and stench. Such sacrilege could be corrected only by resorting to severe measures; and how perfectly reasonable and proper Jesus's action was, is attested by the fact that the men whom He expelled offered no resistance, and that there was no intervention in their behalf. There could be no better examples of the cowardice that flows from an evil conscience, and of the strength of indignant virtue.

In the other case there was no reason to suppose that gracious words would ever make any impression upon the Scribes and Pharisees. Stern words might. At least Jesus owed it to His disciples, and to the multitude, to expose the hollowness and corruption of these men; for "they shut up the door of the kingdom of God, neither entering in themselves nor suffering others to enter." Canon Farrar has well caught the spirit of the occasion.

And they loved their blindness; they would not acknowledge their ignorance; they did not repent them of their faults; the bitter venom of their hatred to Him was not driven forth

by His forbearance; the dense midnight of their perversity was not dispelled by His wisdom. Their purpose to destroy Him was fixed, obstinate, 'irreversible; and if one plot failed, they were but driven with more stubborn sullenness into another. And, therefore, since Love had played her part in vain, 'Justice leaped upon the stage;' since the Light of the World shone for them with no illumination, the lightning flash should at last warn them of their danger. There could now be no hope of their becoming reconciled to Him; they were but being stereotyped in unrepentant malice against Him. Turning, therefore, to His disciples, but in the audience of all the people, He rolled over their guilty heads, with crash upon crash of moral anger, the thunder of His utter condemnation.\*

2. These passages appear to make small impression on some persons' minds. Their thoughts and feelings run so habitually in the other channel, and they are so much more fully in sympathy with the gentle side of Jesus's character, that they flinch when they see Him wielding His knotted scourge, and turn aside when He pours out the torrent of His hot denunciation. While these persons would regard the proposition to cut these passages out of the Gospels as sacrilege, they would never have missed them had they originally been omitted. We need not go over the ethical argument again, to show that the rugged moral qualities are as important as the softer ones, and that they are never wanting in the highest characters; but we may inquire why they are so often undervalued.

We have to go back only a little way in the history of society to find a time when the severer moral traits appear to have reigned almost supreme. Justice, or what was called such, was administered with merciless

\* Vol. II., page 244.



rigor. The roll of capital crimes was a long one, and prisons were little better than the dens of wild beasts. Charity was but feebly organized. The unfortunate, the weak, the ignorant, and the poor were almost abandoned to make the hard struggle for existence alone. The regimen to which children were subjected was so stern that heavy tasks, cruel teachers, frequent beatings, and much misery, are things indissolubly associated with the school. Current religious and moral teaching dwelt on the harsher side of moral and religious truth.

We often fail to appreciate the enormous social changes or ameliorations that have taken place within recent years. For example, I cut the following from a review of a book that has but recently appeared:

Everybody has heard of Rowland Hill who, in 1840, achieved his daring idea of penny postage. A life of him has been written by his nephew, Dr. Birkbeck Hill, the editor *par excellence* of Boswell. His oldest brother was Matthew Davenport Hill, whose life has also been written; his youngest brother (save one who died early) was Frederic, the subject of the present memoir, and now the sole survivor of five very remarkable men, Edwin and Arthur being the other two brothers. Mr. Frederic Hill is now in his ninety-first year. We realize his age when we read that he well remembers his great-uncle, John Hill, who enrolled himself as a volunteer against the Pretender in 1745, and that he himself has shared in two royal jubilees—that of George III. in 1810, and that of Queen Victoria in 1887. He remembers also his maternal grandfather, William Lea, who rescued a reputed witch from a moat into which she had been flung by a mob; and he was a boy of fourteen when a murder was committed in Birmingham for which impunity was secured by the murderer's appealing to the wager of battle before Lord Ellenborough and the full Court of Queen's Bench. He saw the pillory in use, he had a hand in abolishing the treadmill in prisons, and that not so very long

ago. He tells of one of his acquaintances "who was subject to occasional fits of insanity. When these occurred he was taken to the lunatic asylum of his district, and there bound to a seat on a pivot, which was whirled round and round till he became insensible." "Within my lifetime," he reminds us, "men were hanged for stealing five shillings' worth of goods." Born in the midst of the Napoleonic wars, "Boney" was a terror to him, and not less the press-gang, which caused the boy to run at night through the streets of Birmingham, though in no danger on account of his youth.\*

But some time ago society took a new trend. The humane sentiment and feeling—the affectional nature of men—has been developed as never before. A new moral type has appeared; or, if not so, it is much more admired and imitated. What a distinguished writer once called "the enthusiasm of humanity" has wrought a transformation in society that we count among the marvels of the age.

That the new spirit was greatly needed, I need not take space to show. The evidence is spread thickly upon the pages of every book that deals adequately with the facts of social history in the olden time. There is far more need to inquire whether, in recoiling from the one scheme, we are not going too near the other. The question is not whether there is too much benevolence or love, but whether mercy has not appropriated that blessed name. Is it true, as we are sometimes told, that crime is only a disease to be cured and not punished? Or that men differ only in inherited qualities, and in an environment over which they have no control? Is it not true that what is called charity is too indiscriminately

\* The Nation, Vol. LVIII., page 140.

bestowed, and that we tend to forget the command that if anyone will not work neither shall he eat? Does not much of the so-called benevolence of the time tend to obliterate differences that God recognizes among men? Does it not tend to a practical denial of the law that whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap? Does not the current Gospel of Environment tend to blunt the sense of responsibility, and to fill those who accept it with a sense of self-complacency?

If anyone doubts what should be the answers to these questions, he should ask himself the meaning of much current sentimentalism. Why is so much consideration shown to criminals? Why is it often so hard to secure the conviction of brutal murderers? And why is it so easy for them to secure respite from deserved punishment? Why do tender ladies send flowers and dainty food to their prison cells? Why do defaulters and bankrupts often receive sympathy that rather belongs to their victims? Why is dishonesty so often condoned, especially if the man who is guilty of it has a reputation for liberality? Why, at last, has family discipline become so relaxed that in many cases the likes and dislikes of children are practically the only law? It cannot be doubted by those competent to deliver judgment, that the stern passages in the life and teaching of Jesus would prove a helpful tonic if they could be more read and more pondered. They would lead men to see that somewhat of our current benevolence is born of sentimentality. That is a weak and flaccid morality which omits or undervalues the stern and rugged virtues.

3. How far a teacher may now go in imitation of these sterner passages in the life of Jesus, is a question that admits of no definite answer. Much depends upon time and place, mental and moral conditions, and particularly the character and standard of the teacher himself. What will do good at one time and place, will do harm at another. What will do some men good, will do others harm. Words that would be received as merited rebukes coming from one man, would provoke only derision and contempt coming from another man. Weak men cannot take the high hand that Nathan took with David, Ambrose with Theodosius, and John Knox with Mary Queen of Scots. None but those like Jesus have credentials to cleanse the Temple; and as for the woes of the Great Denunciation, they would be profane upon lips less pure and holy than His own. It is not mere sentiment to say with Shakespeare:

What stronger breastplate than a heart untainted!  
Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just,  
And he but naked, though locked up in steel,  
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.

Or with Tennyson:

My good blade carves the casques of men,  
My tough lance thrusteth sure,  
My strength is as the strength of ten,  
Because my heart is pure.

But this strength inheres in men, and not in abstractions. However, there is one rule of universal application. No teacher of morals or religion should palter with men in a double sense. No office is more contemptible than that of a seer who sees not, or of a





prophet who prophesies not unto the people right things, but speaks unto them smooth things, and prophesies deceits. More than this, there are times when we may well listen to Milton's grand thunder-roll.

For in times of opposition, when either against new heresies arising, or old corruptions to be reformed, this cool, unpassionate mildness of positive wisdom is not enough to damp and astonish the proud resistance of carnal and false doctors, then (that I may have leave to soar awhile, as we poets use) Zeal, whose substance is ethereal, arming in complete diamond, ascends his fiery chariot, drawn with two blazing meteors, figured like beasts, but of a higher breed than any the zodiac yields, resembling two of those four which Ezekiel and St. John saw; the one visaged like a lion, to express power, high authority, and indignation; the other of countenance like a man, to cast derision and scorn upon perverse and fraudulent seducers: with these the invincible warrior, Zeal, shaking loosely the slack reins, drives over the heads of scarlet prelates and such as are insolent to maintain traditions, bruising their stiff necks under his flaming wheels. Thus did the true prophets of old combat with the false; thus Christ Himself, the fountain of meekness, found acrimony enough to be still galling and vexing the prelatical Pharisees. But ye will say, these had immediate warrant from God to be thus bitter; and I say, so much the plainer is it proved that there may be a sanctified bitterness against the enemies of the truth.\*

\* Apology for Smectymnuus.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### JESUS AND THE CHILD.

THE author of a suggestive and pleasant volume that has recently appeared from the press introduces his theme as follows:

There was a time, just beyond the memory of men now living, when the Child was born in literature. At the same period books for children began to be written. There were children, indeed, in literature before Wordsworth created Alice Fell and Lucy Gray, or breathed the lines beginning,

“ She was a phantom of delight,”

and there were books for the young before Mr. Day wrote Sandford and Merton; especially it is to be noted that Goldsmith, who was an avant-courier of Wordsworth, had a very delightful perception of the child, and amused himself with him in the Vicar of Wakefield, while he, or his double, entertained his little friends in real life with the Renowned History of Goody Two Shoes.

Nevertheless, there has been, since the day of Wordsworth, such a succession of childish figures in prose and verse that we are justified in believing childhood to have been discovered at the close of the last century. The child has now become so common that we scarcely consider how absent he is from the earlier literature. Men and women are there, lovers, maidens, and youths, but these are all with us still. The child has been added to the *dramatis personæ* of modern literature.\*

\*Childhood in Art and Literature, with some Observations on Literature for Children. A Study. By Horace E. Scudder.

The central thought here presented is little likely to be disputed by men of competent knowledge. There can be no doubt either that the child is more prominent in literature now than formerly, or that he appears in a different manner and is differently regarded. Nor is the immediate reason hard to explain. It is the new sense of childhood that has been developed in the last one hundred years. The child has been added to the *dramatis personæ* of modern literature, because he has been added to modern life. Children have indeed always been in the world. They have also always been objects of interest and affection. Ancient times can show cases of parental solicitude for children, as the yearning of the heart for the erring or the dead child, that modern times cannot surpass. Excellent examples are found in The Bible. How David loved the child of Bathsheba! How he mourned for Absalom! Still, it is a fact that the child now holds a place in the thoughts, feelings, and activities of men that he did not hold in ancient or mediæval times, or even in modern times until a recent date. The view of childhood, and in consequence of child-discipline, has been greatly changed.

In antiquity the father often had the power of life and death over his child. The Roman father's child was a part of his property, and could be sold to satisfy his debts. The munificent provision now made for the health, comfort, and pleasure of children, and their improvement—the games and amusements, the books and papers, the pictures and toys—relatively is a thing of modern times. It will, perhaps, be said that similar additions have been made to the scale of

adult comforts and pleasures; that these things are due to the vast progress that has been made in wealth and invention; but these obvious considerations do not fully explain the matter. When all is said and done, the advantage is still with the child as against the man. Or, if there can be any doubt as to the home, we may compare the modern school with the ancient or mediæval one. What labor is given to the study of child nature! With what zeal are its stages of growth marked out! And with what care are studies chosen and courses of study organized with reference to this nature and these stages of growth! Observe, too, the books, the apparatus for illustrative teaching, the material appointments of the school, the libraries, museums, laboratories, the methods of teaching and governing, and above all the pains that are taken in the selection of teachers. No doubt under this last head much is yet to be desired; but we have certainly made great progress as compared with earlier times. It would not do to say that antiquity was indifferent to the character of the teacher; still, Plutarch tells us that men of his time, when they took account of their slaves, finding some better and some worse, sent some to husbandry, some to navigation, some to merchandise, some to be stewards in their own houses, and some, lastly, to put out their money to usury for them; while if they found any slave that was a drunkard, or a glutton, and unfit for any other business, to him they assigned the government of their children.\* That teachers, and still more frequently pedagogues, were often slaves, is well known to all students of educational history. The school is in a good measure

\* The Training of Children.



a reflection of the home. As a rule, kind parents and cruel teachers are not likely to be found together. For example, Martin Luther informs us that schoolmasters in his youth were tyrants and executioners. The schools were prisons and hells, and, in spite of blows, trembling, fear, and misery, taught nothing. He had been whipped himself fifteen times one morning without any fault of his own, having been called on to repeat what he had never been taught. Luther bears ample testimony to the affection of his father and mother, still he relates how severely they punished him. His father once flogged him so severely that he fled from him and bore him a temporary grudge. His mother once whipped him till the blood came because he had taken a paltry little nut. Luther himself says children should not be chastised for an offense about nuts or cherries as if they had broken open a money-box; and he recommends that "the apple be placed beside the rod."\* Coming down to a later day, Macaulay gives us a striking picture of the insensibility of Englishmen to suffering in the second half of the seventeenth century. "Nowhere could be found that sensitive and restless compassion which has, in our time, extended a powerful protection to the factory child, to the Hindoo widow, to the negro slave, which pries into the stores and water-casks of every emigrant ship, which winces at every lash laid on the back of the drunken soldier, and which will not suffer the thief in the hulks to be ill-fed or overworked, and which has repeatedly endeavored to save the life of a murderer." †

\* Köstlin's *Life*, page 11, 12.† *History of England*, Chap. lli.

For our purposes an inquiry into the causes of that vast amelioration of which the new sense of childhood is only a part is more important than the fact itself. However, we cannot here institute so broad an investigation. We may, however, in the first place, emphasize the fact that the new sense of childhood is but a part of a broader movement of thought, feeling, and activity. Man's inhumanity to man, of which the poet sings, is appreciably wearing away. Human nature is coming to be invested with a new sense of worth and dignity. Life is held more dear, and suffering is more regarded.

Various causes have contributed to this remarkable change. However, the grand cause is the life and ministry of the Teacher of Nazareth. He taught the sacredness of human life. He taught the dignity of the human soul. He gave men a new measure of character and worth. In particular, He showed men how blessed a thing is sympathy, and taught them the duty of sympathizing with the poor, the weak, and the wretched. Above all, He it was who assigned to the child the place that he is now coming to hold in the thoughts, feelings, and activities of men. Into this phase of the subject, we must now inquire more closely.

First. He made the entrance of the child into the world typical of the entrance of the individual soul into the Kingdom of Heaven. As there is a birth, so there is a new birth. He said to Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And when Nicodemus asked Him how a man could be born when he

was old, he received the significant reply: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."\* Here is an excellent illustration of the method so often met with in The New Testament of basing ethical lessons on physical analogies. It is, indeed, the only method by which such lessons can be conveyed. Witness the use of the family and of other human relations. God is the Father in Heaven, every man born of woman is a child of His by descent and natural birth, every disciple of Jesus is a child by regeneration or spiritual birth. The Church is a family, Jesus is elder brother, and all others are brethren. To give objective impressiveness to the second birth, it is symbolized in the rite of baptism. It is a birth of water as well as of the Spirit.

This mode of putting the central idea is both natural and beautiful. Similar modes of speech have been widely used for similar purposes. "The words of prophets and psalmists," says Mr. Scudder, "had again and again found in the throes of a woman in labor a symbol of the struggle of humanity for a new generation. By a bold and profound figure, it was said of the great central Person of humanity: 'He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.'"<sup>†</sup> Socrates likened the origin of thoughts in the mind to birth, and, borrowing a figure from his mother's profession, called himself the midwife of his pupils. We

\* John iii. 1-7.

† Pp. 51, 52.

speak of the birth of ideas, of causes, of movements, of the state; we call the great intellectual revival of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the Renaissance, or the New Birth of the human mind: but the profoundest use to which the analogy has ever been put, or ever can be put, was when Jesus told men that they must be born again.

Secondly, Jesus made the child-life typical of the Christian life. Stirred by feelings of ambition and rivalry, the disciples once came to the Master with the question: "Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" They showed the same gross misapprehension that was manifested by the mother of James and John, when she came with her two sons asking that one of them might sit on His right hand, and the other on His left, in His kingdom. His impressive reply is in these words:

"And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set Him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones, which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."\*

This is what modern pedagogists call an object lesson. The words used point to some mental quality that is exemplified in the child which must also be exemplified in the citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven. Men must become little children. What is this mental

\* Matt. xviii. 2-6.



quality? In what respect must men become like children?

Evidently not in the vigor and content of the intellect, for we are exhorted to put away childish things and to be men in understanding. These exhortations come indeed from another teacher, but still from a teacher who well understood his Master. What then? Evidently the likeness consists in that freedom from personal bias, that humility of character, and that teachability of mind which are so characteristic of childhood. The greatest man is he who humbles himself as a little child. This is one of the paradoxes that Jesus introduced into the world: greatness is humility. In substance, it is the same lesson that was taught to the ten when they were moved with indignation against James and John.

“But Jesus called them unto Him and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever would be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever would be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.” \*

Both psychology and history suggest a genetic relation between virgin mind and new ideas and causes. Men of knowledge and mental maturity, of power and standing, are more or less bound by pride of opinion and social connections. Their minds are made up, and to change them would seem to argue instability;

\* Matt. xx, 25, 26.

moreover, their minds have taken on a certain artificiality that defies change. These are natural tendencies, and they are commonly wholly unknown to those who respond to them. How perfectly in character is the question that the Pharisees ask the officers: "Have any of the rulers or Pharisees believed on him? But this people, who knoweth not the Law, is accursed.\*" *This* people are the common people who heard Jesus gladly. Paul's declaration that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called, that is, to preach the Gospel, points at once to those conservative forces which, under similar circumstances, declare themselves the world over. † New ideas are apt to be brought forward by new men. New causes as a rule find their apostles, prophets, evangelists, and teachers outside the pale of tradition and convention. Moreover, the great reason why new causes often prove to be so powerful, is the fact that they open the doors of opportunity to undiscovered talent and genius, which never would have been, or could have been, awakened to life and activity by the old custom or tradition. It was when Jesus had become discouraged about Chorazin and Bethsaida, that he uttered the familiar words, so rich in spiritual philosophy: "I think thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." ‡ The trouble is not so much that the wise and prudent *will* not receive the new word, as that they are *unable* to do so. Their minds have taken on a certain form or cast, and cannot the second time

\* John vii. 47, 48.

† 1 Cor. i. 26.

‡ Matt. xi. 25.

become plastic. Equally significant is another familiar passage. When the chief priests and scribes were displeased as they heard the children crying in the Temple, "Hosannah to the Son of David," Jesus asked them: "Have ye not read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" \* And these further words, which have given the commentators no little trouble, also point to that openness and innocence of the young mind which make it so susceptible to influence: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." In another sense, perhaps, than Wordsworth meant it,

Heaven lies about us in our infancy.

The character of the early converts to the Christian faith is too well known to call for formal description. The words of contempt with which the opponents of Jesus were in the habit of referring to his followers are thickly scattered through the Gospels. When Nicodemus pleaded that the Law did not condemn a man before he was heard, it was a sufficient reply to ask, "Are ye also a Galilean?" When the Pagans finally consented to argue with the adherents of the new faith, they commanded, generally speaking, the learning, philosophy, and literature of the times. The learned and literary classes of the Roman world saw no deeper into the great movement of the ages than Tacitus saw when he wrote: "The originator of that name was one Christ, who, in the reign of Tiberius, suffered death by sentence of the Procurator, Pontius

\* Matt. xi. 15, 16.

Pilate. The baneful superstition, thereby repressed for the time, again broke out, not only over Judæa, the native soil of that mischief, but in the City also, where from every side all atrocious and abominable things collect and flourish." This celebrated passage, it may be observed, called out from Carlyle the observation: "To us it is the most earnest, sad, and significant passage that we know to exist in history." And again: "Tacitus was the wisest, most penetrating man of his generation; and to such depth, and no deeper, has he seen into this transaction, the most important that has occurred, or can occur, in the annals of mankind." \*

It must not be supposed that the ideas now advanced are confined to ethics and religion. They meet us again in the history of science and philosophy. It is a well-known saying that no English physician more than forty years old at the time when Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood, ever accepted that discovery. Pestalozzi, the great reformer of primary education, at one time passed for an ignoramus. When it was charged that he was no scholar, he admitted the fact, and declared that it worked to his advantage. He says himself that for thirty years he did not read a single book. "My incapacity in those respects," he says, "was certainly an indispensable condition for my discovery of the simplest method of teaching." Perhaps some minds will scoff at such a claim; but had Pestalozzi been a well-equipped scholar, had his mind been walled about with learning, had he been a logician, it is im-

\* Essay on Voltaire.



probable that he would have had that nearness to childhood, that sympathy with mind before it is conventionalized, and that sure intuition without which he would have been unknown in the annals of education.

It is well known that Lord Bacon approached Nature in the same spirit that Jesus approached God. He wrote: "Man is the servant and interpreter of nature; we can only conquer nature by first obeying her." And once more: "The kingdom of man, which was founded on the sciences, cannot be entered otherwise than the Kingdom of God, that is, in the spirit of a little child."

Thirdly, Jesus always showed a deep personal interest in children. Some of His most notable miracles are suggested by the word. He healed Jairus's daughter, delivered the boy possessed with devils, restored to health the nobleman's son, and listened to the plaint of the Syrophœnician woman. It was perfectly in character that there should be brought unto Him little children, "that He should put His hands on them and pray." It was also natural that the disciples should rebuke those who brought them. No doubt their view was that the Master was weary or occupied, and that they must protect Him against annoyance. When He saw what the disciples did, He was much displeased, and said unto them: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them,

and blessed them.”\* And this brings us back to the former thought—the child as a type of the disciple. The same chord is struck again in this familiar passage: “And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.”†

It was impossible that such a Spirit should not live close to Nature. His perfect naturalness and simplicity have commanded the widest and most unbounded admiration. Jesus moved among the traditions, conventions, and proprieties of an old civilization, and one in some respects that was highly artificial; but His mind was as fresh, and His character as simple, as though He had come in the very morning of the world. Moreover, His simplicity and naturalness were the main cause of His unfailing touch in dealing with the human heart.

It is almost needless to observe that the ideas which have been presented are anticipations of modern pedagogy. The relation of the child-life to the adult-life; the need of understanding the child-nature; the necessity of getting close to that nature; the value of naturalness, simplicity, and sympathy; freedom from mechanism, routine, and authority; spontaneity and individuality—these are fundamental ideas in our educational philosophy. Rousseau was deeply interested in the child, although he sent his own children to the foundling hospital; and it has been remarked “that there is nothing sadder than that page of ‘The

\* Matt. xix. 14, 15; Mark x. 15, 16.

† Matt. x. 42.

Confessions' in which he relates how he often placed himself at the window to observe the dismissal of school in order to listen to the conversation of children as a furtive and unseen observer." The writer to whom we are indebted for this remark has himself said: "Like the psychology of the child, pedagogy itself, at least in its first chapter, ought to be conceived and written near a cradle." The great superiority of the new education to the old consists mainly in the farther advance that it has made along the path where the Great Teacher pioneered the way.

## CHAPTER XX.

### HIS THEORY OF TEACHING.

IN some quarters this heading may create surprise. "Did the Teacher who was always practical," it may be asked, "who said nothing about theories of any kind, and who kept as far as possible from all art and self-consciousness,—did He have a theory of teaching?" The answer to this question must be distinctly in the affirmative. Moreover, this answer is part of a fact so general and so important that space may well be taken to give it emphatic formal statement.

The Greek word *theoria*, from which we have derived "theory," came from the verb *theorein*, "to view," "to look at," "to consider philosophically," and means "a general view," a mode of regarding any subject, or of "carrying on" any kind of activity. As applied to teaching, speaking, or governing, *theoria* means simply the facts and ideas relating to the art reduced to system or order. This is the proper meaning of our word "theory." It is therefore a mistake to confound theory with conjecture, assumption, or unsupported speculation. If a theory is bad, it is because facts have been wrongly excluded or included in its formation, or because they have been wrongly interpreted. All intelligent action is conducted ac-



according to some facts or ideas properly understood; and for a man to proclaim himself without theories is to proclaim himself without guiding intelligence. The superiority of the self-styled "practical man" over him whom he scornfully calls "the book man," consists largely in his assumed freedom from theories. However, the fact is that the practical man is as much a theorist as anybody else. No man who has ideas is without theories. A learned Oxford professor, writing on the subject of political economy, after observing "that all men at all times have occupied themselves with the creation of wealth according to certain rules and ideas," very pertinently remarks:

No laborious employment can be extensively carried on without the existence of some notions as to the right way of working, and the most fitting methods for attaining the end desired. It is a mistake, though a very common one, to suppose that practical men, as they are called, are destitute of theory. The exact reverse of this statement is true. Practical men swarm with theories, none more so. They abound in views, in ideas, in rules which they endow with the pompous authority of experience; and when new principles are proposed, none are so quick as practical men to overwhelm the innovator with an array of the wisdom which is to be found in prevalent practice.

The difference between men is, rather, that some have good theories and others bad ones, or that some have formed their theories with care while others have not, than that some have theories while others have none. Even the savage has his explanations of natural phenomena. He says, for example, that an eclipse of the moon is caused by a big fish trying to swallow the moon, and so he makes a great noise for

the purpose of driving off the fish. The writer just quoted further observes:

The difference which separates the man of science from the man of practice does not consist in the presence of general views and ideas on one side, and their absence on the other. Both have views and ideas. The distinction lies in the method by which those views have been reached, in the breadth and completeness of the investigation pursued, in the rigorous questioning of facts, and the careful digestion of the instruction they contain, in the co-ordination and the logical cohesion of the truth established.\*

The theories of the quack or charlatan grow out of his own narrow experience, and are limited by it: the theories of the scientific physician are based on the experience of the medical profession.

As to methods, there is a wide difference of opinion. Talleyrand called methods masters' masters. "They are to teachers themselves," he said, "what teachers are to their pupils." Pestalozzi, the great educational reformer, made the method everything, the teacher nothing; a text-book, he declared, was worthless unless it could be used by a person who was ignorant of the subject, as well as by one who was instructed. Jacotot, the French educational reformer, made the same mistake. He declared "that every one can teach, and, moreover, can teach that which he does not know himself." These extreme opinions need not be formally confuted. Educational theories and methods are not machines that can take the place of individual thought and feeling. Important as they are, they can never be accorded a first rank. Compayôé says the wisdom of the ages on this point

\* Bonamy Price: Principles of Currency. Lect. I.

is summed up in the proverb, "As is the master, so is the method."

Jesus said nothing about a theory of mental growth, or of didactic method. Not a word can be found in the Gospels on either topic. Still a theory and method are nevertheless implicitly contained in all His teaching. In this respect, however, He is not singular. The greatest teachers say little or nothing about the principles or rules upon which they act. They are too intent on using their art to make it prominent; nay, more, they know perfectly well that to make it prominent would defeat their ends. That highest art which conceals art is not conscious but spontaneous; those who show it are implicitly guided by principle and rule, but they are too much absorbed in what they are doing to discourse on the principle and rule according to which they do it. Moreover, this is likely to be peculiarly true of moral and religious teachers, owing to the engrossing nature of their subjects.

Following the course that He did, Jesus left an invaluable lesson to all who should come after Him in the same succession. What one receives as religious truth, and his formulation of it, often turns in whole or part upon that scheme or system of thought which he calls his philosophy. Theology is but an ordered arrangement of what is accepted as religious truth, and is largely influenced by one's view of human nature. Philosophy and theology have their place, and an important one too, but this is not the preacher's pulpit or the moralist's platform. Hungry men come to the table for bread, not to read some recipes for

the preparation of dishes, or to look at some kitchen furniture. Waiting souls do not care to look into the inside of the minister's study. Processes and tools are absolutely necessary, but they are not for public use. An educated minister will have a theology that will regulate, in a general way, his thinking, and so his teaching; but the proper rule for him to follow is to preach *according* to a theology, but not to preach a theology. His audience want fruits or results. He will not waste his time in proving that men have souls, but will assume it, as Jesus did, and act accordingly. He will not dispute about the conscience or the will, but will deal directly with men of conscience and will. He will not consume his energy in explaining his theories and methods, but use them in a practical prosecution of his work. He will follow an order in preaching, but not make the mistake of devoting himself to proving that this order is the true one. The wise teacher of secular studies prepares and conducts his work according to certain pedagogical principles, but he does not carry these principles into the school-room and substitute them for the subject-matter that he is to teach. The preacher should conform to the same rule, as Jesus Himself did. And still it should be observed that, in one respect, the analogy of the school does not hold in the church. Sometimes a false philosophy, or wrong ideas of method, may stand in the preacher's way, while such a state of things is rarely or never found in the school. Materialistic views of man's nature, or wrong notions of the value of means or agents employed in influencing men, may stand in the way of



the preacher's success; and if so, he may find it necessary to grapple with these errors directly, and, if possible, overcome them.

The theory of teaching that Jesus conformed to may be considered under three heads.

1. His view of human nature.
2. His ideal or purpose.
3. His choice of means to accomplish His ideal or purpose.

These ideas are closely connected by their very nature. The first is formed with primary reference to the second, and then the two determine the third. We go at once to His view of human nature to find the ground or the basis of His whole system.

The most important question that can be asked about a religious founder relates to his personal character. The next most important one relates to the basis or foundation of his system. Upon what does he ground it? How does he distribute his emphasis? Man has a physical and a mental nature, and the first question that can arise is whether the founder makes his appeal to the one or to the other. Does he attempt to control men through their bodies or through their minds? If through their minds, then the second question is whether he emphasizes the ceremonial, the doctrinal, or the practical elements of religion. Does he throw his stress upon rites, upon teaching or doctrine, or upon life and conduct? If the answer be teaching or doctrine, the third question is whether the teaching is mainly of a philosophical or scientific cast, or of a practical cast. Does he seek mainly to energize the intellect, or to move the

affections and the will? Or, if the answer be life or conduct, then the next question will relate to the means by which he shall control or regulate it. While this is not a fully wrought-out analysis, it will assist us in our attempt to place Jesus as a religious founder.

We are first to observe that He wholly excludes from His system the element of external force. He never resorts to material means, to physical pains and penalties. His kingdom is a kingdom of the mind, His reign a reign of the spirit. Still, this exclusion of the physical element is affected negatively rather than affirmatively; He never entertains the thought of using compulsion even to the extent of making a formal denial. The calm confidence with which He rests on moral means, is the grandest tribute that has ever been paid to human nature.

But, in strict conformity to His method, He propounded no theory of the mind, and engaged in no psychological discussions. He used the terms that were commonly applied to mental facts, and used them, no doubt, in their currently accepted meaning. I shall not make these terms the subject of criticism. To enter upon the question of dichotomy or trichotomy, or even to attempt definitions of "soul," "spirit," "mind," and "heart," would take me far from my path. It suffices to observe that the words are not used in The New Testament with scientific accuracy, but are rather employed in general or literary senses, and that, accordingly, they are but different names for the same thing, or at least more or less overlap. When we hear Jesus say: "Thou shalt love

the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (or, as another Evangelist puts it, "With all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind")\* we cannot draw from the saying a true analysis of man's spiritual nature, but only that man is to bring all the powers of that nature to this service of love. However, while there is no formal trace of a division of the mind in His teaching, such a division is still implied throughout.

Jesus never says anything about the intellect, or the organ of knowledge; but He constantly assumes that men are capable of knowing and understanding, and accordingly addresses them as rational beings. He never mentions the sensibility; but He ever appeals to men as possessed of feeling, and so as capable of being moved. He is silent as to the faculty of choice and volition; but the assumption that men can decide and act lies at the root of all His teaching. He always speaks to men as thinking, feeling, and acting beings.

He assigns a central place to the will. This becomes clear the moment that we consider His educational ideal. His aim is practical, not speculative. He strove to produce worthy characters and noble lives, and not men of great intellectual powers and attainments. Men are known by their fruits. Not every one that says unto Him, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of the Father who is in heaven. To many who say to Him that they have prophesied and done many won-

\* Matt. xxii. 27; Luke x. 27.

derful works in His name, He will declare that He never knew them, and command them to depart from Him. Whosoever hears His sayings and does them, is like a wise man who builds on a rock, while every one that hears them and does not do them, is like a foolish man who builds on the sand. The man who will do the will of God, or who *wishes* to do that will, is the man who shall know the doctrine. He demanded of certain persons who rendered Him lip-service, "And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" One day as He was talking to the people, one of their number told Him that His mother and brethren stood without desiring to speak with Him. Jesus answered: "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And He stretched forth His hand toward His disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." When he was asked what was the great commandment in the Law, He replied, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Again, to a lawyer who asked Him what he should do to inherit eternal life, He replied that if he would do these commandments he should live; and when the lawyer, seeking to justify himself, demanded, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus answered with the parable of the Good Samaritan. And finally, there is the pathetic lament over



Jerusalem in the same tenor: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye *would* not!" He has certainly read the Gospels to little purpose who does not see that the object which Jesus constantly holds before Him is wholly ethical.

There are two views of human nature, directly opposed to one another, that men have espoused. One is the optimistic view, the other the pessimistic. The first emphasizes the good that is seen in man, the second the evil. Abundant facts can be gathered to support either view; and whichever one a man adopts depends largely on his mental habit and tone, which again depends upon heredity and previous experience. When one broods on the whips and scorns of time, the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely, the pangs of disprized love, the law's delay, the insolence of office, the spurns that merit takes of the unworthy, man's inhumanity to man, the weakness and moral cowardice in the world, the thrift that follows fawning, the self-seeking, the simulated humility, the feigned superiority,—he does not wonder that the Juvenals, the Rabelais, and the Swifts should be moved to scorch and blast humanity with the fires of satire. But this is not the view of Jesus. He recognizes evil men and evil-doing, and rebukes them, as in the Great Denunciation. He tells men that they are lost, that they are estranged from God, that they can not rescue or help themselves, and that He has come to seek and to save the lost. Still He is profoundly optimistic. If men are bad, they can become better. He sees great possibilities in human nature, and His

estimate of these possibilities is measured by the sacrifice that He is glad to make in order that they may be realized. He speaks to men of regeneration, of a higher life, and of salvation from sin. Beholding the ignorance, the weakness, and the wickedness in which men are plunged, He does not condemn or despise them, but His compassion is the more deeply moved. His soul travails for the lost, as a woman in labor. He never spurns the publican or spits upon the harlot. He never satirizes human nature, or holds its limitations up to mockery. No pessimist would have said, or could have said: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly at heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." His heart was the fountain-head of the modern enthusiasm of humanity.

What has been said of the will calls for a further word or two. As we have seen in a former chapter, Jesus recognized a state of heart that is beyond His reach. He gave as a reason for speaking in parables, that in seeing men saw not, and in hearing heard not, neither did they understand; for in them was fulfilled the prophecy, "By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive." He did not speak to men answering to this description, in order to render His teaching more intelligible, but the contrary. In a word, His explanation of His use of parables brings us to the line where man's free will and God's sovereign power meet. With this old problem I shall not deal, except

to say that both The Testaments recognize its existence, and that they never solve it. God is sovereign and man is free. But bother ourselves over the speculative problem as we may, we should not forget that Jesus always approaches the subject on its practical side, and deals with men as beings capable of thought, feeling, and action.

But we must not forget that right living or good conduct is an effect or end following from certain causes. Neither must we fail to inquire what were the causes or means that Jesus used to accomplish that effect or end.

These causes were His teachings. Jesus ever regarded His teachings as a means, not an end. He strove to regenerate men's hearts that He might reach their lives. As has been said, His salvation consists in internal regeneration and reformed life. He sought to mold character and shape life from the inside, not the outside. Hence He preached faith and love, but the faith that He preached was of a very simple and direct kind. A learned writer, who has explained how the primary faith passed into the secondary or speculative Christian faith, has said in a passage a part of which has already been quoted:

The Greek words which designate belief, or faith, are used in The Old Testament chiefly in the sense of trust, and primarily trust in a person. They expressed confidence in his goodness, his veracity, his uprightness. They are as much moral as intellectual. They imply an estimate of character. Their use in application to God was not different from their use in application to men. Abraham trusted God. The Israelites also trusted God when they saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore. In the first instance there was just so much of intel-

lectual assent involved in belief, that to believe God involved an assent to the proposition that God exists. But this element was latent and implied rather than conscious and expressed. It is not difficult to see how, when this proposition became to be conscious and expressed, it should lead to other propositions. The analysis of belief led to the construction of other propositions besides the bare original proposition that God is. Why do I trust God? The answer was: Because He is wise, or good, or just. The propositions followed: I believe that God is wise, that He is good, that He is just. Belief in God came to mean the assent to certain propositions about God.\*

And so in the Gospels, faith is primarily trust in God, and not intellectual belief in certain propositions or dogmas; or, as the author before quoted, says:

In the first instance the intellectual element of belief was subordinated to the ethical purpose of the religion. Belief was not insisted upon in itself, and for itself, but as the ground of moral reformation. The main content of the belief was that men are punished for their sins and honored for their good deeds; the ground of this conviction was the underlying belief that God is, and that He rewards and punishes. The feature which differentiated Christianity from philosophy was, that this belief as to the nature of God had been made certain by a revelation. The purpose of the revelation was salvation, regeneration, and amendment of life. By degrees stress came to be laid on this underlying element.

It is very true that Christian faith soon began to pass from confidence in an unseen Person to confidence in an intellectual ground upon which this primal confidence rested; or to pass beyond the moral stage into the metaphysical stage, or belief in certain propositions or technical definitions concerning Him,

\* Dr. Hatch: *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages on the Christian Church*, Lect. XI.



His nature, relations, and activities. While Jesus has been the cause of more theologizing than all other teachers put together, He was the farthest possible removed from being a theologizer Himself. It is the absence of the theological element, and the subordination of the intellectual element to the moral element, that constitute in great part the simplicity, the directness, the effectiveness, and the charm of Jesus considered as a teacher. The channels in which His teachings flow are never clogged up with logical definitions and divisions, with metaphysical subtleties and refinements. He assumes without argument the fundamental facts of religion, as God, human freedom, responsibility, and immortality; assumes them so completely that He never even mentions them as assumptions, and then makes His appeal direct to the spiritual intuitions. The greatest mark of His teaching is the power with which it takes hold of the unconventional, universal, spiritual nature of man, and this is really the ground of His authority, as has been shown in another chapter.

He will go hopelessly wrong in dealing with the teaching of Jesus who does not grasp these fundamental ideas. Jesus did not make any use whatever of scientific or philosophical truth. He relied upon moral truth, on the simple substance of that, and so excluded its formal and intellectual elements. He had nothing to say about learning and wisdom, as men count learning and wisdom, and He pronounced no beatitudes upon the learned and wise more than upon the rich and the powerful. He says rather: "Blessed are the poor in spirit;" "blessed are they that

mourn;" "blessed are the meek;" "blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness;" "blessed are the merciful;" "blessed are the pure in heart;" blessed are the peacemakers;" "blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake."

As already intimated, the basis of Christian faith was progressively changed. Intellectual conviction took the place of trust in a person. Three hundred years sufficed to effect the transformation that Dr. Hatch thus describes:

It is impossible for any one, whether he be a student of history or no, to fail to notice a difference of both form and content between the Sermon on the Mount and the Nicene Creed. The Sermon on the Mount is the promulgation of a new law of conduct; it assumes beliefs rather than formulates them; the theological conceptions which underlie it belong to the ethical rather than to the speculative side of theology; metaphysics are wholly absent. The Nicene Creed is a statement partly of historical facts and partly of dogmatic inferences; the metaphysical terms which it contains would probably have been unintelligible to the first disciples; ethics have no place in it. The one belongs to a world of Syrian peasants, the other to a world of Greek philosophers.\*

Faith, then, is the lever with which Jesus proposed to move the world. There is indeed a sense in which faith, as a fully completed state of mind, follows, and so is conditioned upon repentance; but this is not the primary view, according to which faith or belief leads to repentance and obedience. Moreover, if we were to examine the repentance and obedience of the Gospels, we should find that they are as unlike the repentance and obedience of the schools as the

\* Lect. I.

faith of the Gospels is unlike the faith of the schools. Every great religious reform has been an effort more or less conscious and intelligent to cut loose from the theological development, and to move back towards the ancient simplicity of Christian teaching and life.

In few things has the Christian world made a greater mistake than in attaching an exaggerated importance to theological doctrines, or to faith in the speculative sense. The spiritual engine that moves the life is a very simple one. It is not composed of abstract articles or creeds, of formal dogmas and definitions. Moral conduct flows directly from the will, which is conditioned upon the feelings, which again depend upon the understanding. But this is not the whole understanding. There are many valuable facts and truths lying in the field of proper religious instruction that have little, if any, direct effect upon the spiritual life. The fact is, the number of truths that immediately influence the conduct of the majority of men is extremely small. DeQuincy tells us that in that great social organ which, collectively, we call literature, there may be distinguished two separate offices that sometimes blend and that are sometimes found in a severe insulation. "There is, first, the literature of *knowledge*; and, secondly, the literature of *power*. The function of the first is—to *teach*; the function of the second is—to *move*: the first is a rudder, the second an oar or a sail. The first speaks to the *mere* discursive understanding; the second speaks ultimately, it may happen, to the higher understanding or reason, but always *through* affections of pleasure and sympathy. Remotely, it

may travel towards an object seated in what Lord Bacon calls *dry* light; but proximately it does and must operate, else it ceases to be a literature of *power*, on and through that *humid* light which clothes itself in the mists and glittering *iris* of human passions, desires, and genial emotions." Moral and religious teaching must take hold of the active principles of human nature, rather than of the scientific understanding; and no intelligent reader can proceed far with the Gospels without discovering that they belong to the literature of *power* rather than to the literature of *knowledge*.

Ethical religions are attended by one danger from which non-ethical religions are free. It is that the disciple will fall into ostentation, hypocrisy, and self-consciousness. It is so easy for the reformer to advertise himself as one who is reformed. How carefully Jesus guards the first two points, is seen in the passage in which He commands His disciples to take heed that they do not their alms before men, to be seen of them; that when they do their alms they shall not sound a trumpet before them, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; that thine alms may be in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret Himself shall reward thee openly." Similarly when they pray, they shall not be as the hypocrites, who love to pray standing in the synagogues, and at the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou



hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Self-consciousness, which is even a more subtle danger than ostentation, is warded off in another well-known passage. It is the description of the gathering of the nations upon His right hand and upon His left, when He comes in His glory. When He says to those on His right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat," etc., they make answer, saying, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered and fed thee? or thirsty and gave thee drink? when saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick or in prison and came unto thee?" Here is no claim of worth or merit, nor even consciousness of good desert. The plain implication is that the good man is so intent upon living a good life that he does not take knowledge of the fact that he is living one. Nothing could possibly be farther removed from the ideal of Jesus than the man who parades his goodness and virtue, unless it be the man who parades the correctness of his religious views and the soundness of his theological opinions. Far indeed from the spirit of the Gospel is the vaunt of orthodoxy.

What has been said about self-consciousness is particularly applicable to the subject of rewards and penalties. Jesus promises heaven and threatens hell, but He never commands men to labor with the direct end in view of winning the one or of gaining the other. What I conceive to be the true function of the re-

wards and punishments of the Gospel is well stated by Mr. Ruskin in a passage which I quote.

The essential idea of real virtue is that of a vital human strength, which instinctively, constantly, and without motive, does what is right. You must train men to this by habit, as you would the branch of a tree; and give them instincts and manners (or morals) of purity, justice, kindness, and courage. Once rightly trained, they act as they should, irrespectively of all motive, of fear or of reward. It is the blackest sign of putrescence in a national religion, when men speak as if it were the only safeguard of conduct; and assume that, but for the fear of being burned, or for the hope of being rewarded, everybody would pass their lives in lying, stealing, and murdering. I think quite one of the notablest historical events of this century (perhaps the very notablest) was that council of clergymen, horror-struck at the idea of any diminution in our dread of hell, at which the last of English clergymen whom one would have expected to see in such a function, rose as the devil's advocate to tell us how impossible it was we could get on without him. [Men] should be afraid of doing wrong, and of that only. . . . Otherwise, if they only don't do wrong for fear of being punished, they have done wrong in their hearts already. [God] never would be pleased with us if [our desire to please Him should be our first motive]. When a father sends his son out into the world—suppose an apprentice—fancy the boy's coming home at night, and saying, "Father, I could have robbed the till to-day, but I didn't, because I thought you wouldn't like it." Do you think the father would be particularly pleased? He would answer, would he not, if he were wise and good, "My boy, though you had no father, you must not rob tills?" And nothing is ever done so as really to please our Great Father, unless we would also have done it, though we had no Father to know of it. And how vain both [threatenings and rewards] with the Jews, and with all of us! But the fact is, that the threat and promise are simply statements of the Divine Law, and of its consequences. The fact is truly told you,—make what use you may of it; and as collateral warning, or encouragement, or comfort, the knowl-

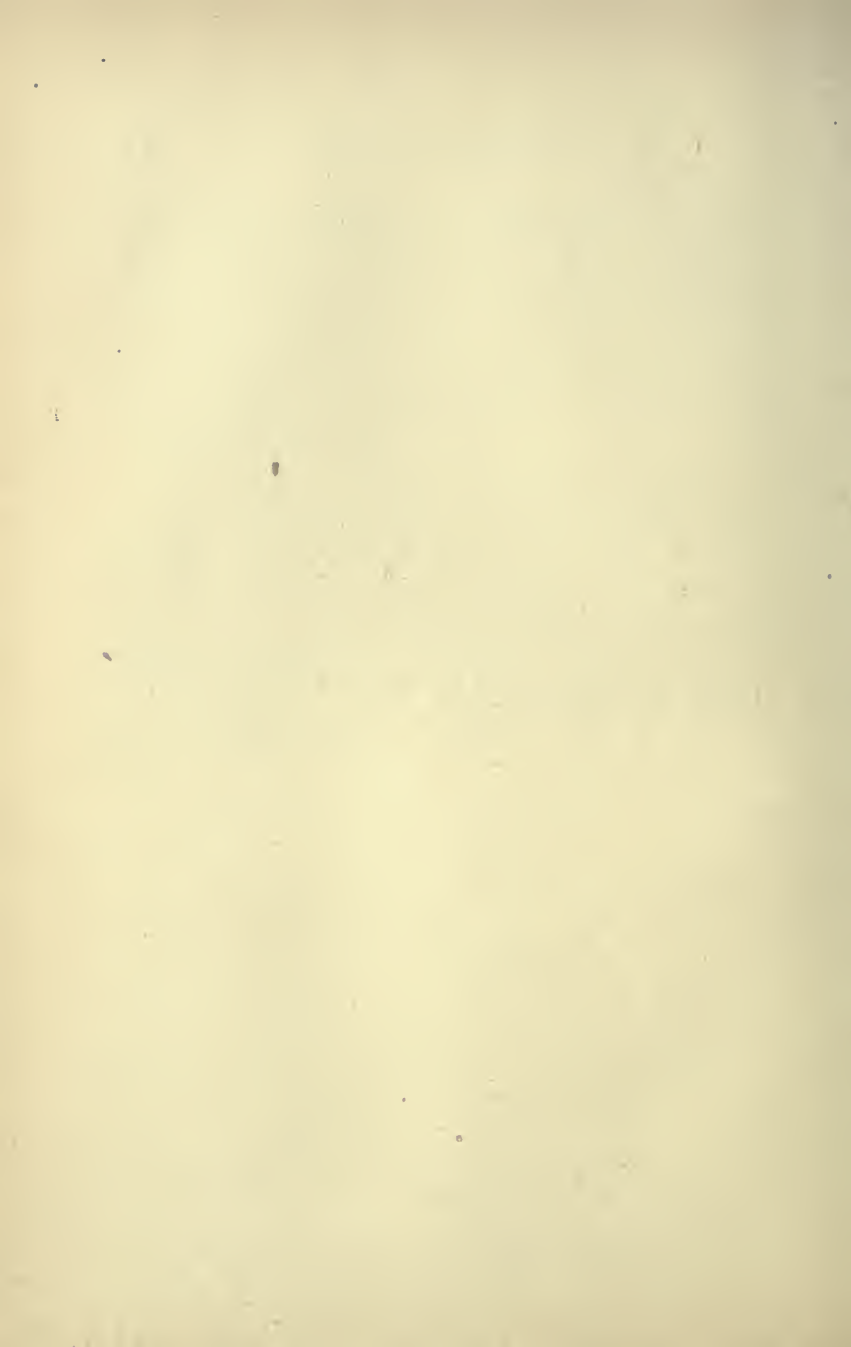
edge of future consequences may often be helpful to us; but helpful chiefly to the better state when we can act without reference to them. And there is no measuring the poisoned influence of that notion of future reward on the mind of Christian Europe in the early ages. Half the monastic system rose out of that, acting on the occult pride and ambition of good people (as the other half of it came out of their follies and misfortunes). There is always a considerable quantity of pride, to begin with, in what is called "giving oneself to God." As if we had ever belonged to anybody else.\*

In the place that Jesus expects self-forgetfulness to occupy, self-consciousness is often found. When humility takes account of itself, it ceases to be humility. It has been said that whether honesty is the best policy or not, depends upon the condition of the police; also, that the man who is honest because it is the best policy, is at least half a rogue.

\* The Ethics of the Dust. The passage is changed from the dialogue form to the didactic form.

The Making of the New Testament.





# THE MAKING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

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## CHAPTER I.

### OBJECT AND POINT OF VIEW STATED.

BEFORE entering upon the general subject announced above, I must first state my object and define my point of view.

My object is to explain the main causes that led to the writing of the books of The New Testament, the general conditions under which they were written, and, particularly, the processes by which they were preserved, verified, and finally brought together into the collection called The New Testament Canon. This I shall attempt with an audience of plain people all the time in mind, and not an audience of scholars. The facts, of course, are the same in either case, but the statement that would best suit the one might not best suit the other.

My point of view is that of history pure and simple. I shall treat the writings that make up The New Testament as literature in the fullest sense of the word, and shall handle them just as though no claim of Divine inspiration had ever been made in their behalf. This is not because I do not believe in their inspira-

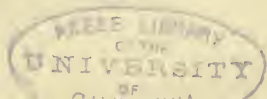
tion, but because, first, inspiration is rather a theological than a historical question, and because, second, there are manifest advantages in sometimes treating these writings from a strictly human point of view. In some ways, it is a fresher and more interesting line of study. The habit of denying or belittling what is called the "human element" in The New Testament—the habit of denying or ignoring the fact that these writings are, after all, the works of their authors—the habit of separating them from all other writings, and, in a word, of refusing them a place in real literature—tends to rob them of their human interest, and to place them in a region transcending ordinary experience.

The method of some apologists cannot be too much reprehended. They start out on the historical path; the Scriptures are to be handled, they say, like other books; but when the facts become few or uncertain, and the path obscure, they fall back upon the assumptions of inspiration and providential oversight, thus bringing into the argument as a premise what should be left as the conclusion. This is reasoning in a circle, and a small circle at that. The end of Apologetics—of what we call Christian Evidences—is the value of the Christian Writings; and the apologist is untrue to his work who brings in that end to help him out in the argument. The Scriptures have so long been accorded prescriptive rights, that it is hard for many who receive them to realize that they must be subjected to the same historical and critical tests as other similar books.

To define my point of view more closely, we will

suppose that Socrates wrote nothing, but gave his teachings to the world in oral words (which is a true supposition); that his principal disciples went forth after his death to teach men their master's sayings and doings; that some of those who had a perfect understanding of all things from the first, some years later, wrote accounts of his life, which accounts by and by became the accepted and revered originals of their doctrine and practice; that one of their number wrote a partial history of his own teaching and experience; that these disciples, in carrying on their work, found it expedient and necessary to write letters to the disciples whom they made, for their further instruction and guidance; that these teachers founded a widely-extended Socratic Society or fellowship, extending to many cities and countries, the whole bound together by a common doctrine, a common work, and a common sympathy; that they left in this Society or fellowship a well-defined and well-established Socratic tradition, one part of which was their own writings; that, after their death, the expanding society, guided by its best lights, collected these writings, thus forming a body of Socratic Memorials, which received the sanction of the body as genuine and authentic;—suppose all these things, and then add the further supposition that, many centuries later, the origin of the Socratic discipline and society, and its earliest literary monuments, are brought under discussion, and we have an inquiry exactly like the method that I intend to make.

Manifestly this is an attempt to get back among the original facts of our religion. To succeed in this at-





tempt even measurably is not easy, but difficult, owing to a number of facts that are often overlooked. One is our remoteness from the country and the time in which these facts are found. A second is our feeble power of reproducing scenes and events so different from those that make up modern Western life. Still a third is the enormous change that has passed over the Christian religion and Church since the first century. For example, we Protestants are accustomed to find our religion in a book; our Christianity claims to be the religion of The New Testament; while Christianity began with persons and with oral teaching, and no writings are found, much less a Testament, until the Gospel had made considerable progress. We shall wholly fail in our attempt, therefore, unless we lay aside some of our most familiar religious and ecclesiastical ideas, and restore, by the historical imagination, forms and figures and facts that live only in the memorials of a distant and almost perished world.

A still further observation should be offered. Full treatment of the subject is not contemplated. Only those facts will be presented that are essential to a good understanding of the matter. My aim is not, properly speaking, to present even an outline of Christian Evidences, so called; it is rather to help the reader to see—to imagine, if you will—the processes that are summed up in the phrase, “Making of The New Testament.” Unfortunately, the part that the imagination plays in history, not to speak of argumentation, is not properly understood. How it is erroneously resorted to as a source of facts or information, we may all understand; but we do not always see its

great value as an instrument of arrangement and interpretation. History does not become real to us unless the facts presented are such as we can distinctly perceive, and unless their organization into a story is such as we can clearly imagine. Much the same may be said of argument. The office of the imagination in logic is even less understood than in history. Why this is so, has been made plain upon earlier pages. Here, as always, the mind imposes upon the subject-matter its own ways of looking at things, and so its own limitations. Accordingly, the Christian Writings have nothing to lose, but everything to gain, by being brought into the closest possible connection with the facts of human experience. I shall make no attempt at delicate strokes or careful painting; my hope is rather that I may throw upon the canvas a half dozen outline pictures marked by boldness, clearness, and verisimilitude.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE MINISTRY OF JESUS.

FORTUNATELY, the most important facts concerning the origin of those doctrines, institutions, influences, and tendencies that make up Christianity and the Christian Church are wholly free from dispute. It is not denied or doubted that the founder was a Jew named Jesus, Christ, and Jesus Christ; that He lived in Palestine in the first years of the Christian era, which was named for Him and begins with the supposed year of His birth; that, after a public ministry of a few years devoted to teaching and good deeds, He came to His death in Jerusalem; and that He created and left behind Him a small body of disciples charged with instructions to carry on the work that He had begun. It is agreed that He originated the first Christian teaching, that He founded the first Christian society, and that He breathed into the world the Christian spirit.

But this ground has been traversed in the previous chapters of this volume entitled, *JESUS AS A TEACHER*. If the reader will turn back to the first of those chapters, and mentally bring it into this place, we shall then be ready to go forward. The ministry of Jesus is

the only standpoint from which we can profitably consider the making of The New Testament. In particular, must the reader remember that Jesus wrote nothing, that He left no books or memorials behind Him, that He was purely an oral teacher, and that no reports of His words and works were reduced to writing until many years after His death.

The remarks made in the first of the above paragraphs do not mean, of course, that anything approaching absolute unanimity has been reached concerning the origin, truth, and value of the Christian religion. Only this is asserted—that there is substantial unanimity as to the existence of Jesus, and the emanation of the Christian movement from Him. Once it was the fashion for those who rejected Christianity to reject it altogether. The reality of Jesus was denied, or that he was an impostor was asserted. These old and crude theories have given away to new ones that are more refined. It is not now the fashion to deny the reality of the Founder, or to attribute to Him deliberate imposture. The most noteworthy theories of recent years are the myth, propounded by Strauss, and the legend propounded by Renan; and both of these concede that at the heart of The New Testament there lies a large mass of undeniable fact and truth.



## CHAPTER III.

### THE PREACHING OF THE APOSTLES.

FEW things in the life of Jesus are more significant than the calm confidence with which He looked to the future. To prepare for that future, He gave good heed. From the days immediately following His baptism, we hear of His disciples. The abandonment of John the Baptist by John and Andrew, and their cleaving to Jesus, was a part of the "decrease" of the old preacher, and of the "increase" of the new one, which John himself foretold. Fluctuating as were his fortunes, there was always a number of true disciples who never "went away;" and this group served as a nucleus for a larger and less stable body, goers and comers, whose relation to the Teacher was determined by a variety of influences. Within this company of true disciples was gradually formed the band called "The Twelve" and "The Apostles," who were marked out for their particular work by their relative fitness, as well as by their Master's choice. To them He gave constant attention. He taught his disciples: "The Comforter . . . shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance;" "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations . . . teaching them to observe all

things whatsoever I have commanded you;" "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Before they went out, however, under this commission, the Apostles had already done some preaching. The Twelve had made a trial mission under the commission, "As ye go, preach;"\* and the Seventy had, at a later day, executed a similar command.† These earlier commissions had been carried out under the Master's eye; on their return those who were sent "told Him all that they had done." The time finally came for the Apostles to act under their final and larger commission.

In one particular The Acts of the Apostles reads like the Gospels: it is a record of teaching, preaching, and exhortation. The Apostles "entered into the temple about daybreak, and taught;" "And every day, in the Temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach;" "Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them." Peter and John, after testifying and speaking the word of the Lord in Samaria, "preached the Gospel to many villages of the Samaritans." Philip preached to the eunuch, as they rode in the eunuch's chariot. Afterwards the same evangelist preached in all the cities from Azotus to Cæsarea. Saul proclaimed Jesus in the synagogue of Damascus. At Cæsarea, in the house of Cornelius, Peter referred to the publication of the good tidings that was made by Jesus throughout all Judæa, beginning from Galilee; and declared that the same Jesus had charged His disciples to tes-

\* Mark ix. 30; John xiv. 20; Matt. xxviii. 20; Mark xvi. 15.

† Matt. x. 7; Luke x. 1.

tify unto the people. Certain disciples who went to Antioch, after the martyrdom of Stephen, spoke unto the Greeks of Antioch, and preached. And later Barnabas and Saul met with the church of the same city for a whole year, and taught much people. They also preached in Antioch, Lystra, Derbe, and Perga, cities of Asia Minor. A second time they tarried in the Syrian Antioch, teaching and preaching. Paul dwelt a year and a half in Corinth, and taught. Apollos spake and taught in Ephesus. In the same city, Paul "went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading;" he "declared unto the people all things that were profitable for them, and taught publicly, and from house to house." The Acts closes in a way to recall most impressively the giving of the commission. "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him."\* The Epistles reflect a similar testimony. The Apostles preached, taught, spoke, bore witness, testified, disputed, and exhorted. The great impulse that Jesus originated thus moves on with undiminished power.

Attention has been drawn to the important fact that Jesus was an oral teacher, and not a writer of books. He spoke, He did not write. The Apostles come before us in the same way. They did indeed write books, as we shall soon see, but no trace of the

\* The Acts, v. 2; v. 42; viii. 3; viii. 33; viii. 40; ix. 20; x. 37, 42; xi. 20; xi. 26; xlii. 13, 14; xiv. 7, 11, 25; xv. 35; xviii. 11; xviii. 25; xix. 8; xx. 20; xxviii. 30, 31.

fact is found in The Acts. It is never said that at Antioch, or Perga, or Berea, Paul wrote an epistle. This silence may be due in part to the brevity of the record, but it also well comports with the character of the Apostles' work. Their great office was preaching. Bossuet caught this characteristic feature of the original Gospel when he said in his famous "Exposition," "Christ Jesus laid the foundation of the Church upon the authority of preaching." De Presensé caught the same when he said, "All the expressions employed in The New Testament to designate the proclamation of the new truth, set aside the notion of written documents;" "The Gospel was at first nothing but the proclamation of the good news of pardon flying from mouth to mouth." The thing preached is the Word: Christ Himself is the Word. It pleases God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. The Gospel is good tidings, published, proclaimed; a word spoken and heard. The agents in doing the work are heralds, proclaimers, teachers, preachers. It is as though the glad tidings were too glad to wait upon a slower messenger than the loving voice and a personal herald. Emphasis is laid upon this fact because it is such an important one in the history of the primitive Church.

It is impossible for a careful student whose eyes are not blinded by preconceived opinions to pass from the Gospels to The Acts without observing striking differences. I do not now refer to those differences that mark the fuller development of the Christian faith and institutions, but to changes of a more significant character.



The record of Jesus is much fuller than the record of the Apostles. He was one, they many; He preached in Judæa only, they all over the Roman world; He crowded His work into three or four years, they filled a whole generation with theirs: and yet there are four Gospels and one Acts of the Apostles. Concerning Him we have, considering the times, an abundance of interesting detail; concerning them, with the exception of two or three of the most important, we know almost nothing. Of no Apostle save Paul is it possible to write an extended life, and it is possible in his case largely because he has himself left such full literary memorials. This disparity in our knowledge is perfectly natural. The theologian will justify it with an abundance of arguments; but he may not include among them the great superiority of Jesus to any and all of His disciples. Such is, nevertheless, the plain, literal fact. The old theory of inspiration tends to equalize in men's minds the various parts of the Bible; while if they would cut loose from that theory, and study Scripture more from the human point of view, they could not fail to recognize the fact that inspiration is a thing of degrees,—could not fail to see that there are great differences as respects the forms of discourse, the elevation of language, and the depth and fullness of thought. Such are the differences that we notice in passing from the Gospels to The Acts: a little space will be given to their exposition.

First, the disciples are much more limited and confined in forms of discourse than their Master. In the transition we see at once that the parable has wholly

disappeared. We never read of an Apostle, "A parable spake he unto them." When we consider the admirable adaptation of the parable, in the hand of Jesus, to the ends of religious instruction; when we remember how much of His noblest and most characteristic teaching is conveyed in that form, we cannot fail to see how great a loss its disappearance implies. Moreover, the proverb, or sententious maxim—the gnomonic wisdom—in which the longer discourses of Jesus so abound, can hardly be detected in The Acts of the Apostles. Of disputation, there is an abundance; but there is slight trace of that method of questioning which Jesus handled with such mastery. Familiar preaching survives; there is still teaching in homes as well as in synagogues and in the Temple; there is preaching from house to house as well as in public places; but The Acts furnish few glimpses of that admirable conversational eloquence which gives the Gospels so much of their charm and power. No doubt the scantiness of the record here has something to answer for, but it does not account for the full difference. It is undeniable that the preaching of The Acts has more of the forensic tone, more of the tone of the public assembly, and less of prophetic authority.

Secondly, this difference reaches beyond power and methods to substance. The teachings of Jesus have more freedom, more spontaneity, more depth and fullness. His teachings are the teachings of a creator and master. They are new and original utterances. Jesus indeed used old methods and old materials, since preaching righteousness is ever much the same,

but He so used them as to stamp Him a great original. Those who witnessed His work wondered how He could do the things that He did, having never learned. They thought that study, learning, scholarship, are the great matters, as indeed they sometimes are; they did not grasp the idea of a teacher standing so close to truth, to life, and to God, that he spoke of an original knowledge. But it was this very quality of His teaching that constitutes the "authority" that so astonished the multitude. With authority the Jews were familiar enough, but not with such authority as this. Their Scribes taught with the authority of theological learning and ecclesiastical position; Jesus taught with the authority that comes from looking into the open vision of truth and seeing the heart of things. He read character and life in the same way. He knew all men; He needed not that any should testify of man, for He knew what was in man. It is indeed written that He read and quoted the Scriptures, and commented upon them; but it should be said that He read and quoted as a matter of accommodation to His hearers, and that He rarely read or quoted that He did not, by his manner, arrangement, or comment, throw new and unexpected meaning into old texts. He who needed not that any should testify of man, needed not that any should testify of truth. Such is the note of His teaching; it is not the note of study or preparation, but of intuition. But the common note of the Apostolic teaching is very different. It is the note of the learner, and not of the master. The Apostolic teaching lacks the boldness and confidence that are so characteristic of

Jesus. There is a certain imitation that, as well as their own constant profession, proclaims them disciples. Compare, for example, the Pentecostal sermon with the Sermon on the Mount. The second need not be again characterized; but the first is an argument, a logical discourse, constituted by binding together with appropriate comment old texts, and supplementing them with declarations of fact based on personal testimony. Its conclusion is, "Know ye therefore"—in consequence of this reasoning and testimony—"that God hath made this same Jesus both Lord and Christ."

Reviewing these points of difference, I see no reason to dissent from these words of Renan: "Far from having been created by His disciples, Jesus appears in all things superior to His disciples." Hence the great superiority of the Gospels among the writings of The New Testament. Dr. Neander calls the abrupt transition from the Apostles to the Apostolic Fathers "a phenomenon singular in its kind." "In other cases," he says, "transitions are wont to be gradual; but in this instance we observe a sudden change. There are here no gentle gradations, but all at once an abrupt transition from one style of language to another; a phenomenon which should lead us to acknowledge the fact of a special agency of the Divine Spirit in the souls of the Apostles."\* This is all very true. In fact, the great historian might have marked a similar transition in tone and substance. But there is an earlier transition, though one easier and less precipitate; the transition from Jesus to the

\* History of the Christian Religion and Church, Vol. I., pp. 656, 657.



Apostles. If the latter change points to a special agency of the Divine Spirit in the souls of the Apostles, the earlier one must point to a closer relation of Jesus to the unseen and the spiritual world. And this is what Jesus and the Apostles all tell us. He is Master, they disciples.

As preparatory to the next step forward, it will be well to restate these two facts:

1. The Apostles were teachers and preachers, like their Master.

2. They depended in the first place, as He did altogether, upon oral discourses.

The nature of the primitive preaching—the sources whence it was drawn, and from which it derived its authority, its method, its relation to The New Testament writings—are topics that will receive attention in the next two chapters. For the present it will suffice to say that, whereas we go to The New Testament to find the sermons of the Apostles and of Jesus, we go to the sermons themselves to find the origins of The New Testament.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE EPISTLES.

IN the preceding chapters it has been shown that oral preaching and teaching were the source of historical Christianity,—that our religion originated in the spoken words of Jesus. There is not, either in the Gospels or in The Acts, a trace or an intimation that any other instrument or agency would be employed in spreading the faith, the use of The Old Testament in preaching to the Jews always excepted. Jesus wrote no books, He said nothing to His disciples about writing books. He told them to go and preach. Excluding the short epistle quoted in Chapter XV., and the reference to the “former treatise” made in the introduction, I recall nothing in The Acts that shows that any Apostle or evangelist ever wrote a single word. But while the Gospel began with preaching, it did not, and could not, long continue in that exclusive form. Books were a necessary outgrowth of the second half of the Apostolic Age. Except the short one just referred to, there is no epistle now extant that antedates the year 50. At least, Dean Howson holds that our oldest epistle (so-called) is the First Thessalonians, and that it was written at Corinth, in Paul’s second missionary

journey, in the year 52.\* There had now been twenty years of continuous preaching. Hitherto writings were uncalled for, and would have been out of place; now they are urgently needed, and are the most natural things in the world. Let us glance at what had been accomplished up to this time.

The Gospel had passed beyond Jerusalem to Judæa, beyond Judæa to Samaria, beyond Samaria to Syria, beyond Syria to Asia Minor, and beyond Asia Minor to Macedonia, Greece, and Italy. Jerusalem, Samaria, Cæsarea, Antioch, Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth, and scores of other places, great and small, had received the new religion. The wide field stretching from Antioch to Corinth may be called Paul's field. Within this field, disciples multiplied and labor increased. The conquests made must be held, and new conquests must be won. Both of these objects, to say nothing of the discipline of believers, made the organization of local societies necessary, and these, again, called for ministers. The nature of the Apostolic office, as well as the number of congregations, prevented the Apostle himself from doing this work. Local ministers must be provided. Accordingly, from the time that Paul made his first missionary journey into Southern Asia Minor, we read of such ministers. One class were called elders, bishops, and pastors, indifferently; another class were called deacons. Moreover, there grew up around Paul a group of able and active young ministers called evangelists, whom we may think of as lieutenants or sub-apostles, some of them in immediate attendance upon himself, and

\* Life and Travels of St. Paul, Chap. xi.

some on detached duty. These helpers, again, appointed pastors and deacons. All this time, remember, oral teaching was the sole reliance, not only for evangelization, but also for Christian discipline. But all these ministers together could not accomplish the work that needed to be done. The calls for help that came up from every quarter were more than Paul and his helpers could respond to. In one way, the employment of bishops and evangelists even added to his work and responsibility, since these ministers needed to be instructed in their peculiar duties. Witness the letters to Timothy and Titus.

As we have seen, the primitive Gospel was orally delivered and orally transmitted; it was a tradition in the original sense of that word. This is true of the lessons taught by Jesus; He delivered them orally, and they were orally repeated. But the preaching of the Apostles covered more ground than that of Jesus. Their preaching consisted in telling what Jesus had done and suffered and who He was, as well as in repeating the lessons that He had taught them. To a great degree their sermons were narratives, their preaching story-telling. They told the things that they had *seen*, as well as the things that they had *heard*.\* They spoke of Jesus, who went about doing good, and offered themselves as witnesses of all things which He did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem.† One of them described their work more fully: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands handled, of the word of life;

\* Acts iv. 20. † Ibid, x. 38,39.



. . . that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you.”\* Those who were not able to tell the story from an original or first-hand knowledge, told it as they received it from others. Thus, to use a form of expression common to Catholic and Anglican writers, the deposit of the faith was confided to the Church. The treasure that is now in writings was then in living preachers. The older ministers intrusted it to the younger, with the command to hand it on to still others in the same manner. It is noteworthy that while not one of the Epistles contains a particle of evidence showing that the Gospel—or the Evangelical Tradition—then existed in a written form, they all abound in references to an oral or preached Gospel. It was natural that Epistles should be written before Gospels. The principal Gospel facts and teachings could very well be propagated during one generation by a ministry whose leading members had companied with Jesus; but in the young churches, although their members had a firm grasp of the cardinal Gospel truths, questions of vital importance would constantly arise,—questions of spiritual life, of ecclesiastical discipline, of gifts and ordinances, that only the authority of an Apostles could settle. So much doctrine as sufficed to convert men and qualify them for church membership, left a thousand things unsettled. Young Timothy was not the only disciple who had to be taught how to conduct himself. The relations of Christianity to Judaism and Paganism had to be determined, and the law of love applied to the varied phases of human life. No doubt the Apostles did

\* I. John i. 1-3.

much of this work in their personal ministrations; no doubt pastors and evangelists did much more; but the proper evangelical work of the Apostles prevented their becoming local pastors, and they were compelled to make up for their absence by writing letters. In these considerations, in great part, the Epistles find their explanation. From first to last, it is taken for granted that the churches are in firm possession of the Evangelical Tradition, or oral Gospel, so that the Epistles make no pretensions to being the fundamental books of our religion. Nor must it be forgotten that writing letters was a small part of the Apostles' labors, much smaller than preaching the Gospel.

Thus do we reach an answer to our question as to the form that Paul's writings assumed. He might have written a Gospel; he might have written a "Scheme of Salvation," a formal treatise upon Christianity. He could have set forth in order a full exposition of the faith, practice, and organization of the Church. How much disputation he might have prevented if he had written the last! But he did nothing of the kind. It did not lie in his way to do any one of these things. Such was not the call of the hour. He became a letter-writer, and thus used the most direct, the most personal, and one of the least formal kinds of composition to promote his purpose. Except that to the Hebrews, his letters conform to the antique model, according to which the name of the writer comes first. The address, "Paul an Apostle of Christ Jesus, etc., unto Timothy," will serve as an example. It may be added that without these addresses other Epistles would have shared the

fate of the Hebrews: their authorship would be in question.

One relation of the Apostolic Epistles to Apostolic preaching is reflected in the difficulty that scholars find in fixing the time and the order of the Epistles. The Acts mentions no letters; the Epistles themselves are not dated; and we are left to make out their dates, and the order in which they appeared, by logical inference from facts, often slight in themselves, scattered through the primitive writings. There is only one document the date of which is fixed beyond all dispute—what Dean Howson calls “The first document presented to us from the acts of the primitive Church,” the letter from the Apostles and elders written at Jerusalem unto the brethren which were of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia. For the rest, the reader will find a good example of the reasoning by which the dates are fixed, in the argument of the same writer to show that the First Thessalonians was written at Corinth, and is the first of Paul’s epistles.

The Epistles then, although the oldest New Testament books, are not the originals of our religion. The Gospels, the composition of which is certainly later than the oldest Epistles, if not later than all of them, reveal to us the first and formative period. Moreover, the Epistles are in no sense expositions of, or treatises on, Christianity. They are partial at best, dealing with phases of the subject, not with the whole subject; they are occupied with parts of the faith and practice, and do not pretend to thorough treatment. I speak of them now individually and collectively.

There are indeed differences in the Epistles; some are more like expositions and treatises than others. They grew out of particular circumstances and conditions, and deal with immediately practical, and even personal, questions.

One other topic should receive brief mention. Because the Epistles are not the originals of our religion; because they do not formally deal with the first age of Christianity, but with the second age, it must not be supposed that they do not bear witness to the first age, or that their witness is of small value. On both points the exact opposite is the truth. These writings assume the existence of the Christian tradition; nay, more, they tell us what this tradition was. The genuineness and authenticity of the Gospels have been often challenged on the theory, apparently, that if their authority can be broken down the historical basis of Christianity is sapped. There could not be a greater mistake. The Gospel is in the world, and its origin must be accounted for. More than this, it was in the world at the middle of the first century. This the Epistles, the first of which began to appear about that time, conclusively establish. That there is a group of Epistles, including some of the greater ones, whose genuineness has not been seriously disputed, but is rather universally admitted, is a capital fact in dealing with the origin of Christianity. It is a capital fact because these writings assume the contemporary existence of all the essential Christian facts; the story of Jesus,—His words and works, His doctrines and commands, His institutions and ordinances, His promises and warnings. Thus, were the Gospels as docu-



ments put out of the way, the Church, the Gospel, and Jesus would still remain. Instead of the problem being solved, the student would find that it had become more difficult. The facts of the year 60, or even 50, call for such a story as the one that the Gospels tell us quite as imperatively as the facts of 1895. We might possibly imagine that the human mind had invented the Church in the course of nineteen centuries; but we cannot think it possible that it could have invented in the course of half a century. The Epistles call for the Gospels much as the second act of a Shaksperian drama calls for the first act, or as the Constitution of the United States calls for the Declaration of Independence.

How vast a change in the resources and methods of the Church has been wrought since the primitive age! So accustomed are we Protestants to finding our religion in The New Testament, and nowhere else, that we have difficulty even in imagining a time when the the same religion was preached, and believed, and practiced, and there was no Testament. For us the book is everything, the oral preaching nothing. For the first Christians the oral preaching was everything, while the book did not exist. In one respect Catholics have an unquestionable advantage over us. Their habit of drawing immediately upon a so-called living tradition handed down in the successions of the bishops—whatever else may be said of it—makes them the better able to understand some features of the primitive Church. In fact, there is a measure of truth in their view, that The New Testament is a sort of history which the Church made of itself.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE GOSPELS.

THE writer of the Third Gospel says that, since many had taken in hand to draw up narratives concerning those matters which had been fulfilled among the disciples, it seemed good to him also to write unto the excellent Théophilus, that he might know the certainty of the things in which he had been instructed.\* The writer of the Fourth Gospel says he wrote that men might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing they might have life in His name.† In neither the First nor the Second Gospel does the personality of the author appear even for a single moment, and in neither one is there any avowal of an aim or purpose on the part of the writer. However, there can be no doubt on this latter point in either case. The four Gospels all agree in this—they look to certainty and belief; their purpose is evangelical, and they are often appropriately called “The Four Evangelists.” Thus they had the same purpose that Jesus Himself had, His words and works; His continued appeal to men was that they should believe. Written after the Epistles (at least after most of

\* Luke i. 1-3.

† John xx. 31.

them), the Gospels furnish accounts of events in the same line of history without which the Epistles would, in our day, be largely unintelligible. Hence all the Gospels may be described in the same words that Mark uses to introduce his narrative, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

All Christians recognize a dependence of the written Gospel upon the spoken Gospel, but this recognition does not seem to embrace more than an identity of subject-matter. How the stream of oral testimony flowed into and filled the Gospel,—how preaching became Scripture,—is a question that has occupied so little attention that it does not seem to be generally understood that such is the case. The former theory, which perhaps is the one now generally entertained, is that the four Gospels were struck off at different times and places by single impulses of Divine power; that they were written much as the Tables of the Law are said to have been produced; and that they are, to all intents and purposes, Divine compositions. Without pausing to show how far this theory is false or true, I shall go on to connect the written and the oral Gospels. No other writer known to me has so well set forth this connection as DePressensé, and I shall attempt little more than to condense his general sketch.\*

On the days following the feast of Pentecost, the young Church seems to have pitched her tent on the mount of glorious vision, ready to strike it again at the first signal. Nothing is less likely to occur to her in this frame, than the thought of writing books.

\* Jesus Christ: Life, Times, and Work.

The Gospel is a fervent, appealing call; it is the good news of pardon flying from mouth to mouth; it is the oral word, and means the work, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The Church has for a long time no other holy books than those of the Jews. Charged with the mission of proclaiming the Kingdom of God to the whole world, the Apostles were not concerned to write books; they were charged with a far grander mission. In this period the Church may be called the Church of the Oral Testimony. However, this testimony was not uncertain and fluctuating. If the whole Church were to be witnesses unto the end of the earth, the Apostles were to occupy the foremost place among those witnesses. This explains the great care that Jesus took to instruct them and attach them to His person. It explains, also, the care taken to fill the place of Judas with a witness of the resurrection, chosen of the men who had companied with the disciples all the time that Jesus went in and out among them, from the baptism of John unto the day of His ascension.\* Thus, the testimony that was to be the rule and the check and the canon, in the primitive Church, was the testimony of the Apostles. The distinctive mark of an Apostle was to be an immediate and acknowledged witness of Jesus. Hence the Apostolic preaching became the nucleus of the Evangelical Tradition—the core of the oral Gospel.

This tradition began to take a definite form from the very first. Peter's sermons in The Acts set forth the great facts of the life of Jesus. The sermon delivered in the house of Cornelius, especially, is

\* Acts i. 21.



an epitomized Gospel, which reminds us of Mark's history. The apologetical discourses delivered to unbelievers kept to the most general facts; while in the inner circle of the Church, the Apostolic teaching and testimony expanded into far greater richness of detail. Ordinary acts of religious life had a special significance. The frequent breaking of bread would call up before the memory the scene of the last supper—words and acts—with all that the scene imported. The eleventh chapter of the First Corinthians, written before a single Gospel had appeared, shows that the account of the institution of the supper was fixed in the remembrance of the Church. Paul, in writing that chapter, and Luke, in writing the account in his Gospel, drew from the same source, viz., the certain and permanent tradition, or account, of that event which was in the full possession of the disciples. The baptismal formula was a center around which material facts were naturally grouped. The oral Gospel increased in fullness. Many a saying or act lying dormant in the minds of the Apostles was called into life by the events of history. The experience of every day—the grave questions which arose; the striking applications of one and another portion of the teaching of Jesus; the accomplishment of his predictions—all contributed to revive in the minds of His disciples, and to fill with meaning, many of the sublime utterances which had at first passed their comprehension and been forgotten. How this would be, is illustrated to every man of thought by his own experience. We have an excellent example in the case of Peter at Cæsarea. When he saw the signs of Pentecost re-

newed upon the members of a Pagan household, he remembered "the word of the Lord, how that He said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." \* Than this nothing could be more natural or more beautiful. Nor were such experiences infrequent; they may be said to have occurred almost every day. And thus, in the most natural manner, tradition grew and was completed.

Tradition tended to assume a form more and more exact and definite. Long poems and songs have been transmitted from generation to generation in oral forms. The Jews are pre-eminently the nation of traditions. The traditions of the Elders were thus preserved for generations before they were embodied in the Talmud. The Rabbis kept a purely grammatical tradition for nearly seven hundred years. Assuredly, the Gospel history could be, and would be, carried in the memories of men to whom it was the one great concern. This primitive tradition, which preserved the historic Christ of the Church by impressing His features on loving souls, finds a touching and faithful symbol in Mary, the mother of Jesus, who, according to Luke, kept in her heart the gracious things of which she had been the witness. To preserve the faithful memory of the past, was the general solicitude of the primitive Church. This is illustrated in a passage found in a book of the second century, which puts into the mouth of the Apostle Peter the words: "I am accustomed to recall to mind the words of the Lord, which I had heard, so as to engrave them on my memory."

\* Acts xi. 16.

Such was the mental habit of the first disciples. Irenæus, in the next century, says he did the same thing with the words of his teacher Polycarp.

By and by written narratives began to come to the aid of the Christians. This is shown by the introduction to the Third Gospel. The narratives there spoken of are not the Canonical Gospels; they are not, properly speaking, Gospels at all; they are rather fragmentary relations; but they preserved, in its life and freshness, the testimony of the Apostolic witnesses. These narratives gave a more positive character to the primitive tradition; they formed that common stream from which Paul drew, which was in no sense a floating oral tradition. The allusions in the Epistles to the words of Jesus, which are almost verbal quotations, show that the teaching of the Master was preserved in a very exact form. Such a text as this, "The laborer is worthy of his hire," \* presents a striking coincidence with a well-known Gospel passage.† Such passages show that before our present Gospels were written, the Apostolic testimony, especially as to words and teaching, was assuming a fixed form. To this end, the narratives mentioned by Luke no doubt contributed. Familiar passages of The Acts show that there was a marked tendency among the first Christians to use the same forms of language, to cast the Evangelical narrative into one mold, which, however, allowed divergences of detail. The same tendency in respect to other things is found in the second century.

Accordingly, tradition was the fountain of Canonical

\* 1 Tim. v. 18.

† See Luke x. 7.

Scripture; from it the Gospels issued while the fountain was still flowing, pure and abundant, over the very ground which Jesus had trodden. This view explains certain words attributed to Jesus, found in early Christian literature, which are no doubt authentic, as the words quoted by Paul: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." \* Our New Testament does not contain all that was in Apostolic tradition.

Our Gospels are not older than the year 60 A. D. Up to this time, Jerusalem is the Christian center and metropolis. The concourse of Apostolic men there naturally tended to preserve the Gospel story. When the Jerusalem group is broken up, the Church can no longer be contented with oral tradition, or the imperfect narratives that have thus far appeared; there are no official proceedings; all is done naturally, in consequence of a change of circumstance. Our Gospels were not, as some seem to suppose, brought out with éclat as inspired Scriptures. The second Church was unlike the first in this, it had no ark of cedar in which to enshrine a holy book. Each Gospel arises spontaneously, as occasion calls it forth; it appears without observation, and is not ushered in with a proclamation.

Omitting the inspirational or providential element, the above is an outline of DePressensé's general construction of this part of the Evangelical history. This omission is made because it is inconsistent with the purely historical and human standpoint of this essay. The eloquent historian then takes up the

\* Acts xx. 35.



books one by one, showing that Matthew is the composition of Levi, the publican, and that it appeared first in Palestine; that Mark is the composition of John the Evangelist, and that it is in substance the compendium of facts and discourses that Peter used in his preaching; that Luke is the composition of the physician of that name, and that it tells the Gospel story as Paul was wont to tell it; and that John is the composition of the beloved disciple, who wrote it to supplement the others, towards the close of the first century. Through these particular constructions I can not follow him; nor is it necessary. My aim is not to give a history of the Gospels, but only to present a general view of the human causes and conditions that led to their production. Perhaps the more material facts can be so grouped as to make a still stronger impression.

The sermons reported in The Acts may be divided into two classes—Jewish sermons and Gentile sermons. These differ from one another, not in aim, but to a degree in the circles of ideas through which the aim is realized. The Law was a schoolmaster to bring the Jew to Christ, but the Gentile had no such schoolmaster. But through Jewish and Gentile sermons alike, there runs the common evangelical element that is the characteristic feature of The New Testament. To both nationalities the Apostles preached the Gospel, and taught all things whatsoever the Master had commanded them. Hence they became narrators—tellers of the new story. Fragments of narrative or allusions to narrative are found in every sermon that is mentioned. In their first recorded meeting

after the disciples were finally parted from the Master, mention is made of the time that Jesus went in and out among them, beginning from the baptism of John until the day of His ascension. On Pentecost, Peter spoke of Jesus of Nazareth as a man approved of God by miracles and wonders and signs. In Solomon's porch he returned to the same theme. The next day before the Council it was the same way, and even when the Apostles had been beaten and forbidden to speak, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ. Stephen followed their example.\* And so at Samaria, at Damascus, on the road to Gaza, at Cæsarea, at Antioch, at Miletus, and before Agrippa the burden of the story was the same. These sermons are never fully reported; but no matter how meagre the report may be, the great theme is always mentioned. In one instance we have a condensed evangelical narrative. When Peter had recovered from his surprise in the house of Cornelius, he went on to say:

The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: He is the Lord of all: That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judæa, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him. And we are witnesses of all things which He did, both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed Him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead. And He commanded us to preach unto the peo-

\* Acts i. 21, 22; ii. 22; iii. 12; iv. 10; v. 40-43; vii. 55.

ple, and to testify that it is He which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead. To Him gave all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.\*

This report is of great interest, both because it is the first one of the kind found in The Acts, and because it illustrates how the Evangelical story tended to assume a definite form. The historian gives us but a rapid summary of an elaborate discourse; still this summary is a little gospel in itself. Beyond question, we may see similar gospels back of such expressions as, "He preached Christ" and "He preached Jesus." This is what it was to preach Christ. We have a similar gospel, and a still earlier one, in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, while the Epistles abound in references to others that are not formally presented. These are to be regarded not only as summaries of doctrine, but also as epitomies of the life of Jesus.

We come therefore to the conclusion that the first gospels, or first evangelical narratives, were oral compositions given to the world in the sermons of the Apostles. For years no other gospels were known. Still more, these gospels constantly tended to greater fullness of matter, and greater definiteness of form. Beginning with such a syllabus as those used by Peter and by Paul, the preacher would naturally go on to amplify in the directions that he was led by his own knowledge. Still more, the preacher would naturally seek to enlarge the store of materials that he could use to enforce and illustrate the different propositions

\* Acts x. 34-43.

of the summary. Different sermons preached by the same man would deal with different parts of the Evangelical story, and much more different sermons by different preachers; so that we may imagine that, in time, such a church as that in Antioch would come into the possession of a large part of the whole tradition. There can be no reasonable doubt that the principal churches within a generation or two were in possession of a large portion of the matter now found in the Four Gospels.

Thus, the elaboration of the materials out of which our familiar Gospels were formed, began in the teaching and preaching of the Apostles. There is nothing extreme in the assumption that these Gospels themselves, or at least the first three of them, thus began to take on their shaping. The process was carried on by those most familiar with the facts. On this point the ancient tradition that Mark and Luke merely committed to writing the Evangelical story as Peter and Paul respectively were accustomed to tell it, is most suggestive.

Admirable as oral Gospels were in their time, they could not in the long run suffice; the Christian mind longed for something more certain and permanent, and it was not only natural, but inevitable, that written gospels or narratives should appear. Who produced the first ones, and at what times, we have no means of knowing; but there can be little question that Luke, in his introduction, refers to narratives that had been produced in just this way. The work of composition would be assisted by causes that we are too apt to overlook or undervalue. There was



first the retentiveness of the ancient memory, while the forms into which Jesus had thrown much of his teaching,—the maxim, the parable, and the parabolic discourse,—took fast hold of the mind.

I have sought to throw light on the origin of our Gospels—particularly to explain how the written Evangelical narratives grew out of the sermons of the Apostles. If nothing more has been done, perhaps the subject has been brought into the field of common human life and interest, and so been shorn of some of its mystery. As I have used the word “tradition,” I should add that I use it, not in the received ecclesiastical sense, but in the sense of the highest Christian antiquity. I mean by it the body of accepted Evangelical teaching growing immediately out of the life and person of Jesus. It is the same thing as the Gospel story.

To this chapter may very properly be appended a paragraph touching The Acts of the Apostles. The writer begins with referring to the former treatise that he has made concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, just as though he were about to add, “And I shall now take up the story and carry it forward;” but, as though hurried by the very impetuosity of his subject, he rushes on, without making a formal connection, to the later matters with which he is to deal. The book stands to the Apostles in a relation similar to that in which the Gospels stand to Jesus. It is the Gospel in the second stage of its history. In some measure, it was the composition of an eye witness of the things recorded; for the rest, any explanation that applies to the First and Third Gospels will apply to this book.

## CHAPTER VI.

### CHARACTER OF THE EVANGELICAL TRADITION.

IN the foregoing discussion some use has been made of the word "tradition;" and as the word is occasionally found in The New Testament, and frequently in Church literature, it may not be amiss to review the leading facts that have been presented in the last three chapters under the aspect that the word suggests. We should at least try to form a definite and correct notion of what the original Christian tradition was.

The meanings of the Greek verb *paradidonai* and the Latin verb *tradere* run parallel throughout. Their first meaning is *to give up, to deliver over, to transmit*, without any reference to what is delivered or transmitted; their second meaning, *to deliver over, or transmit*, some mental thing, a product of the mind. *Paradosis* and *traditio*, the conjugate nouns, have three meanings, also parallel: (1) The act of giving up, handing down, or transmitting; (2) The act of transmitting some product of the mind, a legend, saying, or doctrine, without regard to the means of communication, whether oral or written language; (3) The thing delivered, as the product of

the mind that is transmitted or handed down. The English language has no word that is the equivalent of *paradidonai* and *tradere*, but the noun "tradition" has the three meanings expressed by *paradosis* and *traditio*. It is to be observed, however, that the English word is narrower than the Greek or Latin word. It makes the instrument of transmission oral language; while they apply to oral and written language indifferently, the Latin, in fact, rather preferring the written form. Still it should not be supposed that the channel of transmission in a given case must forever remain oral speech, or that the tradition must always continue in an unwritten form: this element relates rather to the original act of delivery, and to the early stages of the transmitting process.

Jesus delivered his teachings in oral, not in written, words. He gave to the Apostles the commission: "Preach the Gospel to every creature;" "Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;" and under this commission they went forth and preached everywhere what they remembered of His life and teachings. Wherever they went, they called to their assistance evangelists, and also bishops or pastors, whom they entrusted with the ministry of preaching and teaching. Paul wrote to Timothy: Keep that which is committed to thy trust; hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus; and the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also. The great salva-

tion began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto men by them that heard him. Paul said to the Corinthians: I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you; I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received. Such was the nature of all teaching and all instruction in the early days of the Church.

But in course of time, as has been already explained, these forces became inadequate. The fuller instruction of believers, the discipline of the Church, and even the propagation and permanence of the Gospel rendered written documents an imperative necessity. What had been delivered and received as an oral tradition now became, as the usage of words fully justifies us in saying, a written tradition.

We are now in position to understand the word "tradition" as applied in The New Testament to the doctrine of Jesus. It is found in three passages, two of which are in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians. Paul says in one of them: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us;"\* and in the other: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."† Some writers lay stress on these passages as proving that the "tradition" here referred to was something not found in The New Testament. What the passages mean, is clear enough in the light of the preceding discussion. The traditions are the very

\* Chap. iii. 6.

† Chap. ii. 15.





substance of the Gospel, not something supplemental to it. They are what the Apostle had taught the Thessalonians of Christ; facts, doctrines, precepts, and examples. More specifically, what these traditions were can be gathered from the Thessalonian Epistles themselves. Paul says, for example: "But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another."\* That is, they were already in possession of the Christian tradition on that subject. Again, when he says, "Study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you,"† he is refreshing their minds in a tradition that had been previously communicated. What is more, these traditions had been delivered in written as well as in spoken language: "whether by word or our epistle." In the hands of Paul, *paradosis* means what it does in other Greek writings, something delivered, whether orally, or in written language. The traditions in the hands of the Thessalonians were Paul's discourses and letters, no more and no less. Jeremy Taylor, in illustration, cites Irenæus to the effect that Apostolical traditions were such as these: That Christ took the cup and said it was His blood; that men should believe in one God, and in Christ, who was born of a virgin.

The passages in the Second Thessalonians are the only ones where the Common Version renders *paradosis* as referring to the Gospel by "tradition." But the word is found with that meaning in First Corinthians xi. 2. The passage reads: "Now

\* 1 Thess. iv. 9.

† 1 Thess. iv. 11, 12.

I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. "Ordinances" should read "traditions;" that is, to quote Dean Alford on the passage, "the Apostolic maxims of faith and practice, delivered either orally or in writing." The Corinthians had kept the things delivered as Paul had delivered them.

*Paradosis* is found thirteen times in The New Testament. Nine times it refers to the traditions of the Jews, which both Jesus and the Apostles denounced in no measured terms. Three times it refers to the doctrine of Jesus, as has been noted above. In Colossians ii. 8, where we read, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ," the word may possibly refer to Jewish tradition, but seems to have a broader meaning. The verb is found one hundred and nineteen times, generally in the sense of giving or delivering over something. It occurs in the well-known expression, "That form of doctrine which was delivered you,"\* which should rather read, "Unto which ye were delivered."

The writing and publication of the books composing The New Testament is an event of the first importance in the history of the Church. Their circulation greatly changed the methods of propagating the Gospel, and of disciplining believers. And yet the immediate change was far less than any one who has not studied the subject would suppose. The Epistles

\* Rom vi. 17.

did not supersede, and did not aim to supersede, the oral Gospel. Their very nature made this impossible. On the other hand, they abound in exhortations to the disciples to continue in the things that had been delivered; they build on the foundation that the oral Gospel furnishes. No more do The Acts and Revelation assume to set that Gospel aside. They, too, are supplemental to the Evangelical Tradition. Not until the publication of the Canonical Gospels did anything authoritative appear which could take the place of that tradition. The circulation of these books is an event second in importance only to the primitive preaching. It is, in fact, a republication of the Gospel in a new form. To suppose, however, that the old form immediately gave way to the new,—that oral tradition at once yielded to written memorials,—would be to commit a very great mistake. For a considerable period after the publication of The New Testament writings, the oral Christianity flowed on in a stream almost as broad and deep as before.

NOTE.—The writer has examined the subject of Tradition much more thoroughly in a work entitled, ‘‘Ecclesiastical Tradition’’ (Cincinnati, 1879). In this chapter he has drawn freely upon this book for both matter and language.

## CHAPTER VII.

### SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DOCUMENTS.

SEVERAL facts of great importance in the history of the Primitive Church have been stated in the previous chapters. The Church had its rise in oral preaching; literary documents devoted to the new religion did not begin to appear until twenty or more years after the death of Jesus; Epistles appeared before Gospels; the latter, when they came, were drawn from the stream of oral testimony, or tradition; these writings, both Epistles and Gospels, appeared spontaneously, as they were called out by existing wants, their authors, whatever may have been their ideas of the future, writing for the immediate present; all the writings existed and circulated as separate documents long before there was any New Testament. From this time on, our question is the question of the Canon; but before taking this question up, we must glance at several features that the several books have in common. And first, the propositions that they appeared spontaneously, and that they were written to meet immediate wants, need further elaboration.

The New Testament documents are twenty-seven in number; four Gospels, one Apostolic History, twen-



ty-one Epistles, and an Apocalypse. There is evidence that there was a consultation between Paul and Barnabas, on the one hand, and the "Pillar Apostles" on the other, as to the fields in which they should respectively preach;\* but there is not the slightest evidence that there was ever any agreement or consultation among the Apostles, or any of them, as to writing either Epistles or Gospels. Difficult as it is to prove negatives, one need not hesitate to say that there was nothing of the kind. That is, these books were not written according to a scheme or programme. The twenty-seven documents were written by eight different men; and, with two exceptions, I can not recall, either in Scripture or in the early Church tradition, any intimation that any one of these writers wrote what he did on account of what any other one had, or had not, written. Peter says the Epistles of Paul contain some things hard to be understood, and that the unsteadfast wrest them to their own destruction.† Eusebius says that the Apostle John approved the first three Gospels, and then, recognizing their incompleteness, wrote his own Gospel to supplement the most important omissions.‡ And this is all. Moreover, there is slight evidence of scheme or programme on the part of the individual writers. Luke wrote the Third Gospel and The Acts; that he forecasted a plan before writing the Gospel we do not know; but The Acts is a continuation of the Gospel, and we may concede design. Peter's two Epistles are wholly independent of each other; they are as separate and distinct as any two letters upon

\* Gal. II. 9.

† II. Pet. III. 16.

‡ Eccl. Hist. III. 24.

the same general subject, by the same writer, could be. The same may be said of the three Epistles of John. Paul was the best trained thinker of all the Apostles; he had the most logical mind, was the most of a theologian, and came nearer than any other one to being a system-maker; but how his epistles arose out of exigent demands and duties, has been shown in a previous chapter. In no scientific sense are his letters parts of an "exposition of the faith." Quite the contrary. He did not write what he wrote to the Corinthians on account of anything that he had written, or proposed to write, to the Romans. There is no logical or theoretical connection between the Galatians and the Ephesians. Accordingly, if his fourteen letters should be collected into a volume by themselves, the volume would not be characterized by either unity or completeness. It would not form a "system" or, properly speaking, even a book. In fact, the Apostles' letters have much of the spontaneity, freedom, unpremeditativeness, that marked their sermons. They are a part of the same great work; they strengthen and supplement each other; they are filled with the same knowledge and warmed with the same spirit; they are the writings of men taught of the same Master and working for the same end: but they were written at different times and places, without concert of action or comparison of views; they sprang out of different circumstances and looked to particular ends, and there is no intimation that their authors ever contemplated a second volume of Scripture that should equal or surpass the Jewish

Writings,—no intimation that they ever contemplated a volume of Scripture at all.

The reader who has followed me this far has noticed, no doubt, that slight attention has been paid to dates, and to the order in which The New Testament books appeared. I have not thought it necessary even to raise the question answered with so much ability by Tischendorf, “When were our Four Gospels written?” I deal rather with the manner in which the books appeared than with the time of their appearance. But there is one general fact bearing on the chronological question that I wish to set forth, the fact, viz.: That, so far as we can, either by *a priori* construction or by following other lines of historical inquiry, picture to ourselves what the periods in the history of the Church covered by the Christian Writings were, our ideas are met by the Gospels, The Acts, and the Epistles. The hypothesis is this: Granting the essential parts of the story,—Jesus and His ministry, the Apostles and their preaching, and the Church; granting these forces at work in the Jewish and Gentile fields of the first century,—the evolution traced in the Gospels, in The Acts, and in the Epistles is consistent, harmonious, and natural. Some illustration of this thought will fill out this chapter.

Touching the Gospels, the great question is not so much their dates, or even their authors, as it is their truth and reality. Stated in due form it is this: Do the Gospels give us a true picture of the first age of the Church? Touching the other Christian Scriptures the question is, Do they truly represent the subjects with which they deal? Hardly a thought can be men-

tioned that is made more prominent in the Christian Writings than the thought of growth, progress, development, both in relation to the individual life of the disciple and to the collective life of the Church. The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; it is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal. First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear,—this is the law of nature, and the closer one studies The New Testament, the more will he see the moral and ecclesiastical development there traced conforming to it.

Much has been written about the Gospels' containing notes of controversies and traces of tendencies that followed the times of the Apostles by fifty or one hundred years. They present us doctrines, it is said, in a form more developed than that in which Jesus left them. In particular is it insisted that the metaphysical elements found in the Fourth Gospel could not have existed until a considerable time after the last Apostle had died. In opposition to this view, I contend that had the Gospels been written as late as the middle of the second century, they would almost certainly have contained elements that are not now found in them. The teachings are ethical and spiritual rather than theological and controversial. The facts are plainly told. We find no trace of the critic or systematic theologian. We find the words of a new and most original Teacher, thrown out in the most spontaneous manner, and not a "scheme" or "system." The Gospels are rich in virgin ore.

From one point of view, the great theme of the



Christian Scriptures is the Church. Objectively, this passes through four or five minor stages of development in the period reaching from the baptism of Jesus to the death of John the Apostle. First is the Church of Jesus in the strictest sense—the Church as it was during His own life. It is in an inchoate, unformed state, but its material is undergoing elaboration. Jesus speaks of His Church, but He speaks almost always from the subjective standpoint. He is, in fact, wholly silent touching organization and office-bearers. Second is the Church of the Apostles in the period immediately following Pentecost. The Apostles form the only organization, and are the only officers. Next succeeds the Church of the third period, ushered in by the appointment of the Seven; the period in which it becomes manifest that a more elaborate organization is called for, and in which steps are taken to furnish such an organization. Before the ministry was homogeneous, consisting of Apostles alone, who combined all offices and functions in themselves; but now the first step towards differentiation is taken. Fourthly, we are brought to the Church of local pastors and deacons; the period of which we obtain such full views in the later chapters of The Acts and in Paul's epistles. Last of all succeeds the Revelation, in which we seem to get a glimpse of the bishops of later times. All of this is as natural as natural can be. We may perhaps say that it was a necessary order of development. But the noteworthy thing is, that the pictures of the stages of this evolution are as natural as the stages themselves. Nothing is dislocated or out of place. The Gospels give no forecastings.

They leave the unfolding of the ministry and government of the Church to the books that follow in the order of events, as absolutely as Jesus left it to the Apostles. Similarly, the first differentiation of the ministry came unheralded. And so on to the end.

Special attention may be paid to the history of the Lord's Supper. Three stages in the development of this institution are presented in the first age. Jesus made it an appendage of the Passover. He left the single command, "This do in remembrance of me."\* Immediately succeeding the Pentecost, the disciples celebrated the Supper daily, and in their own houses.† It was a private commemoration. But by and by, when the Church took on a more regular and settled form—as congregations grew—the celebration became a weekly public commemoration, held on the first day of the week.‡

Thus there is an ecclesiastical progress. Moreover, the manner in which this progress is reflected in the several books is an excellent witness to their faithfulness. We have the Church of the Gospels, the Church of the earlier chapters of The Acts, the Church of the later Acts and of the Epistles, and the Church of the Revelation. In short, so far as ecclesiastical order is concerned, any man may be challenged to show that there is the slightest confusion or displacement. Lord Bacon called one of the parts of his great philosophical scheme, "*Prodromi-sive anticipaciones*;" that is, "forerunnings or anticipations" of what would result from the adoption of his philosophy. The Christian Writings contain "forerunnings"

\* Luke xxii. 19.

† Acts ii. 46, 47.

‡ Acts xx. 7.

and "anticipations" as respects spiritual development; but the absence of anticipations in doctrinal or in Church development shows how strictly things are kept in their places, and furnishes admirable proof of the general faithfulness of the reports found in the books themselves. It has often been urged that the Gospels must have been written before the downfall of Jerusalem in the year 70, because if they had appeared afterwards (the argument runs) their authors would have claimed that their Master's predictions had been fulfilled. This argument, somewhat changed in application, may be applied in a more sweeping way. The Gospels contain no notes of admiration, and but slight commentaries; it is not claimed that the words or the acts of Jesus had been justified by subsequent history; the developments of the second and third ages are not anticipated. Even in the second century, professed believers of all kinds appealed to the memorials of the first age in proof of their several doctrines and practices. Heretics did not fall behind Catholic Christians in this regard. And so it has ever been. The very universality and confidence with which this appeal has been made, and is still made, to the earliest literature of Christian antiquity, is evidence that the pictures of antiquity are natural, and are not the work of men whose aim was to fix "tendencies." This reasoning is not conclusive as to the precise date at which the books were written, but it is conclusive as to their general faithfulness.

Finally, it may be stated that the character of The New Testament documents has a very important bear-

ing on their interpretation. A systematic treatise, the work of one mind, is one thing; a collection of letters and narratives, the work of several minds, is quite another thing. However, the development of this suggestion does not belong to this monograph.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE CANON IN ITS FIRST STAGE.

THERE was a Gospel and a Church years before there were Gospels and Epistles. There were Epistles and Gospels decades before there was a New Testament. The making of The New Testament involved two steps wholly separate and distinct; the composition of the writings that compose it, and the collection of these writings into one authenticated body. The writings were produced separately and spontaneously; the collection was made slowly, progressively, and almost equally spontaneously. The New Testament had no editor or publisher in any sense known to literature. How the books were collected and authenticated—that is, how the Canon was made up—I shall in this and two succeeding chapters attempt to show.

First of all, we must divest our minds wholly of the idea conveyed by the name “New Testament;” we must start from the time when there was no such book in existence, but only the materials out of which it was afterwards made. In studying historical questions, we are only too apt to forget chronology. Looking at a man whose life is finished, especially if

he lived many centuries ago, we forget that he was a growth, and see him, or seem to see him, as he was at the culmination of his career. We make similar mistakes in dealing with systems of doctrine and bodies of literature.

Secondly, The New Testament contains twenty-seven distinct documents, attributed to eight different writers. Each of these documents is complete in itself; not complete, indeed, in the sense that it exhausts the subject, but in the sense that it is not a part of a larger whole. We are able to throw them, with two or three exceptions, into groups: books addressed to single individuals, books addressed to single churches, books addressed to groups of churches, and books addressed to classes of persons.

1. The books addressed to single individuals are the Third Gospel, The Acts, the Epistles to Timothy, to Titus, and to Philemon, and Second and Third John, seven in all.

2. The books addressed to single churches are the Epistles to the Romans, to the Corinthians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, and Thessalonians, eight in number.

3. The books addressed to groups of churches are Galatians, First Peter, First John, and Revelation. Galatians and Revelation are formally dedicated, the one to the Churches of Galatia, the other to the Seven Churches of Asia; but in the other two cases we are left to infer the fact from the character of the books themselves.

4. It is the ancient tradition that Matthew wrote for the immediate use and benefit of Jewish disciples

in Palestine, and that idea is supported by internal evidence. Similar evidence shows that Mark wrote for Gentile Christians. The Epistle to the Hebrews was immediately intended for Hebrew disciples, and the Epistle of James is addressed to them in terms. Hence we may say they were all addressed to particular classes of persons.

This grouping takes in all the twenty-seven books but the Fourth Gospel and Second Peter. It is impossible to determine with certainty what special destination these books originally had. Second Peter is classed as a "general" epistle.

From the very nature of the case, these writings would soon begin to get into circulation, at first locally, then generally. No doubt this was anticipated by their authors. In fact, those books that were addressed to churches in great cities, like the Epistle to the Romans, or to groups of churches, like that to the Galatians, may be said to have had a "circulation" from the beginning. Copies would assuredly be made from the autographs, and, for the same reason, collections of documents would be made. The same impulse that would lead believers and groups of believers, such as congregations, to desire single books, would lead them to make up collections of books.

However, this impulse was less strong in both directions than we would at first suppose. First, the literary spirit was exceedingly feeble in ancient times as compared with modern times. Few men, relatively, read books, and the mass of men were dependent upon oral instruction. Moreover, the first churches were planted by Apostles or by Apostolic men. These

were the churches of the Oral Testimony. They knew only the Gospel that had been preached unto them. Apostles and Apostolic men stood out in grand proportions before a book had been written. Churches prized most highly books that had been written to themselves, and next, books written to other churches by men with whom they were acquainted. But, naturally, in the estimation of churches, no books took, or could take, the places of the men who had planted or watered them. By and by, however, the well known Apostle or Evangelist ceased to make his visits; the older members of the churches passed away, and writings became invested with a new interest. However, the equalization of writings and men was slow in coming; even slower, perhaps, was the equalization of the new Scriptures and the old ones, at least in the estimation of the Hebrew disciples, who were devoted to the Hebrew writings, and who, antecedently, never thought of a second canon of Scripture. Still further, we must not overestimate the length that the desire to possess collections of Epistles and Gospels carried the disciples of that day. To say that they desired collections is one thing; to say that they desired *full* collections is quite another. In fact, the idea of a Canon took shape in the Church consciousness slowly,—the idea, namely, that writings of such and such a character were authoritative, like the preaching of Jesus and the Apostles,—that there was a definite number of such writings, that these writings could be separated from all others into one whole,—the developed idea of The New Testament. How early this thought was fully formed—



how early its practical realization became an object of desire and effort—we cannot tell; but, certainly, it was not until great numbers of small collections of books had been made. It may trouble us to conceive of a Christian who is without the conception of a New Testament, even if he is not the possessor of one; but it is clear that several generations of Christians must have passed away before that conception became fully and clearly defined. Accordingly, we must not expect too much in our first search for collections of Gospels and Epistles.

Taken in connection with our knowledge of the writers, the descriptions of the books given above tell us at what points the books were first published, and the regions in which most of them first circulated. It is reasonably certain that Matthew and the Epistle of James first circulated in Palestine; Mark and the Epistle to the Romans, in Italy; the Epistles to the Corinthians and the Thessalonians, to Timothy and to Titus, in the cities of Greece and Asia Minor; the Epistle to the Galatians and First Peter, in Central and Northern Asia Minor; the writings of the Apostle John, in the vicinity of Ephesus. Taking either Corinth or Ephesus as a center, three-fourths of The New Testament documents lay within a comparatively narrow compass. To form the Canon was to bring all the books into one collection, and to stamp both the books and the Canon with the approval of the general body of believers. As pointed out before, partial and imperfect Canons long preceded a complete and final one; besides, these imperfect collections differed considerably in different parts



of the Roman Empire. This, too, was natural, in fact unavoidable.

Two of The New Testament books contain allusions to other books. One allusion is made by the author of The Acts to "the former treatise" which he had addressed to Theophilus. The other is made by the author of Second Peter, and is for our purpose much more significant. It is this: "And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction."† This passage proves, (1) That the writer of the epistle is addressing an audience that Paul had before addressed in the same manner; (2) That he is acquainted with a number of Paul's epistles; (3) That these epistles are also in the hands of those to whom he is writing, and that they have, therefore, attained a considerable currency; (4) That these epistles are regarded as Scripture. We cannot indeed fairly infer that *all* of Paul's epistles had been gathered into one collection, or even that they had *all* been written. The clause, "as they do also the other Scriptures," is exceedingly suggestive; for the Jewish disciples held the Jewish Scriptures in the same reverence as the other Jews, and they did not readily take up the idea that there could be Scriptures not found in The Old Testament.

† Chap. iii. 15, 16.

The Christian writings that next followed the books of The New Testament are those known as "The Apostolic Fathers," filling the period 70—120 A. D. They are the Epistles of Clement, Polycarp, Barnabas, Ignatius, the Epistle to Diognetus, Hermas, and Papias. Three or four of these mention New Testament documents. Clement refers to First Corinthians, Ignatius to Ephesians, Polycarp to Philippians, Papias to Matthew and Mark. Much more, these writings abound in allusions to New Testament books, and in quotations from them. For example, the "Index of Texts" in the Apostolic Fathers found in the Ante-Nicene Christian Library contains fully four hundred references to such quotations, allusions, or coincidences, including all The New Testament books but a few of the shortest Epistles. These references, allusions, and quotations prove conclusively that the Apostolic Fathers, and the Church of their time, were familiar with at least two-thirds of the documents now found in the Christian Canon, and with much more than two thirds of the material. But while the writings of this age are so satisfactory as to the existence and currency of The New Testament books, they contain no reference or allusion to collections of such books. Accordingly, they throw no light whatever upon the progress that had been made in making up the Canon. Here it may be observed that while the name of a book, an allusion to it, or a quotation from it, proves its currency in the time of the one writing it, the absence of these marks does not prove the contrary. No more does the silence of the Apostolic Fathers prove that an

incipient Canon did not exist. The most skeptical can claim no more than that we are left in darkness. But while these writers mention no collections of books, it is clear that such collections had been made, imperfect ones of course, and that some of them had access to them. If this were not the case, these writings would not abound, as they do abound, in quotations and allusions. It is manifest that collections would begin to be formed just as soon as the books began to get into circulation.

NOTE ON THE WORD "CANON."—The Greek lexicons define the word *kanon* as any straight rod or pole. It is used especially to keep a thing upright or straight, to regulate and order it. Liddell and Scott give four cases: (1) The rods of a shield—those to which the rim is fastened, or those to which the handle is attached; (2) A rod or bar used in weaving; (3) Any rod used for measuring, as a carpenter's rule, a testing-rod, or a plumb-line; (4) The beam of a balance. Metaphorically, a *kanon* is anything that serves to fix, regulate, determine, other things, that is, a rule. In this sense, the Greeks had their canons, (*kanones*) of ethics, music, and art. With the exception of those found in The Septuagint, all the strictly ecclesiastical uses are metaphorical.

The word occurs three times in the Epistles: "And as many as walk according to this rule" (*kanoni*) Gal. vi. 16; "Whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule," (*kanoni*) Phil. iii. 16. In the first of these passages, the Gospel rule of faith is signified; in the second, the rule determined by the spiritual attainments of those addressed. The other passage will be presently cited.

*Kanon* is found in early Christian literature. We read of "the sound rule of the saving proclamation;" "the Rule of Christian Teaching;" the Rule of Truth, of Faith, of the Church. "At one time," says Westcott, "it is an abstract ideal standard, handed down to successive generations, the inner law, as it were, which regulated the growth and action



of the Church, felt rather than expressed; realized rather than defined. At another time it is a concrete form, a set creed, embodying the great principles which characterized the doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church."—*On the Canon of the N. T., Appendix A.*

But *kanon* had a definite passive meaning; that is, it meant the thing measured, ruled, determined, as well as the measure or the rule. The third passage in the Epistles illustrates this use: "To preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things, (*kanoni*,) made ready to our hand." 2 Cor. x. 16.

"Canonical" and "canonize," derivations from *kanon*, also have this double meaning. An object that was canonized, and was therefore canonical, was one that had been measured or approved.

It follows, therefore, that the Canonical Scriptures may have been so-called, (1) Because they contain the Christian standard of faith and practice—a rule to be applied; or (2) Because they had been canonized—that is, approved or ratified—by the Church. Both views are held. Westcott decides in favor of the second, and his arguments seem to be decisive. *Kanon* was first applied to the Scripture, so far as can be determined, by Athanasius; but Origen had used the derivatives "canonical" and "canonize" in the same connection in the previous century.

Toward the close of the fourth century, Amphilochius, Bishop of Iconium, gives a catalogue of the books of The Old and New Testaments and adds: "This would be the most unerring Canon of the inspired Scripture." He means that the index or catalogue which he has just given is a rule or measure to determine what is Scripture and what is not. This is the earliest use of the word in this sense found in ancient literature. Three uses of the phrase "Canon of Scripture" have now been pointed out: 1. The Scriptures themselves, as a Rule of Faith and Practice; 2. The Scriptures collectively, as sanctioned by the Church; 3. The list or catalogue of sacred books. The present aim is to show how the collection was made up—how the list was formed.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE CANON IN ITS SECOND STAGE.

THE precise nature of the present inquiry must be kept steadily in mind. It is not so much to discover what documents existed and circulated as Christian Scriptures in the times with which we are dealing, as it is to discover what progress had been made in making up The New Testament. The last chapter brought us to the second quarter of the second century.

“It is a very significant fact,” says Bishop Westcott, “that the first quotation of a book of The New Testament as Scripture, the first commentary on an Apostolic writing, and the first known Canon of The New Testament, come from heretical authors.”\* The reference made in the last item is to Marcion, the famous heretic, who is so prominent a figure in the second century. We first hear of Marcion in Pontus, on the southern shore of the Black Sea, where his father was a bishop. We are not concerned with his life, his doctrines, or with his influence, but only with his relation to our topic.

About the year 150 Marcion came from Pontus to Rome, bringing with him the first New Testament

\*On the Canon of the N. T., p. 282, *Note*.

canon of which there is any trace in literature. This canon consists of two parts: "The Gospel" and "The Apostolicon." The first was a recension of Luke, the second a collection of ten of Paul's Epistles. The Pauline Epistles that were omitted were First and Second Timothy, Titus, and Hebrews. Marcion claimed that the doctrine of the Church had become greatly corrupted, and he proposed to be a purifier and restorer. He denied that he was an innovator in any other sense than this—he aimed to bring back the pure doctrine of earlier and happier times. He considered Paul the only true Apostle, and he constructed his canon from that point of view. He accepted Luke, or a form of Luke, because this could be connected with the preaching of Paul, and all the other Gospels he rejected. History throws no light upon the question why he rejected The Acts and the Pastoral Epistles, and we need not resort to conjecture. The remaining books were thrown aside, of course, because they were not Pauline. In the estimation of what now began to call itself the Catholic Church, Marcion was a heretic. He spent most of his active life in conflicts with men of the Catholic faith, and proved himself a most courageous and formidable controversialist. In carrying on their contentions, both parties must appeal to some authority. As all the Apostles and Apostolic men were now dead, the appeal could be made to only two sources,—the oral tradition handed down in the churches, and Christian Scriptures. As there was no accepted canon—the Canon then being in course of formation—nothing was more natural than that the appeal to Scripture should

raise the question, "What is Scripture?" To a considerable degree, the controversies started by Marcion raged around this question. Marcion's own answer was given in his "Gospel" and "Apostolicon." It does not appear that any of his contemporary antagonists answered by producing a definite list. Two things are, however, evident: (1) That all parties believed in genuine, authentic, and authoritative New Testament Scriptures; (2) That all parties admitted that these Scriptures should be identified. It has been conjectured that the canon which Marcion brought to Rome was the nucleus of the Catholic Canon of later times; and the conjecture is supported, it is said, by the fact that Marcion's is the first formal canon of which we have any knowledge. However, the facts point to the conclusion that Marcion's canon was an innovation. In the early ages of the Church, when so much depended on tradition and general understanding, innovations were commonly put in definite literary forms sooner than the doctrines and practices from which they were departures. Heterodoxy commonly found literary expression earlier than orthodoxy. The first creeds, for example, were the replies of the Church to heretics and heresies. Thus, the articles of the Apostolic Creed,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,—were answers to the principal Gnostic doctrines; just as the expansion of the same articles put forth at Nicea were answers to the views of Arius. Bishop Westcott therefore says it should not be forgotten that the adversaries of Marcion "always charge him with innovating something which already existed, and not



with endeavoring to impose a test which was not generally received.”\* All in all, it seems safe to conclude with the learned Bishop, that, although a definite canon of the Apostolic Writings had not been published in Asia Minor, it “was yet implicitly determined by the practice of the Church.” Still this “implicitly determined” canon must have been incomplete, as we shall see hereafter.

The Christian literature produced in the period 120-170, both Catholic and heretical, is full of evidence to the existence and currency of most of The New Testament, but they contain no mention of any canon save Marcion’s. It should be remarked, however, that the absence of such mention does not prove a negative.

The literature of the second half of the second century throws a flood of light upon our inquiry. It is the age of Clement, Irenæus, and Tertullian, of the Muratori Fragment and the Peshito Version. This chapter will take account only of the two last.

The Muratori Fragment, is a fragment of a manuscript written in Latin about the year 170. It is found in Rome, and is peculiarly interesting in connection with the Western Church. The Peshito Version is a translation of The New Testament into Syriac that was made, no doubt, in the region of the Euphrates about the same time. The Fragment is incomplete, as its name suggests. The catalogue of books that it contains begins with Luke, which is called “the third book of the Gospel;” but there is no room to doubt

\* On the Canon of the New Testament, p. 281, *et. seq.*

that it originally began with Matthew followed by Mark. The following lists contain the books found in the two documents, though not in this order.

## MURATORI FRAGMENT.

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Luke.  
 John.  
 Acts.  
 Romans.  
 I. Corinthians.  
 II. Corinthians.  
 Galatians.  
 Ephesians.  
 Philippians.  
 Colossians.  
 I. Thessalonians.  
 II. Thessalonians.  
 I. Timothy.  
 II. Timothy.  
 Titus.  
 Philemon.

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II. John.  
 III. John.  
 Jude.  
 Revelation.

## PESHITO VERSION.

Matthew.  
 Mark.  
 Luke.  
 John.  
 Acts.  
 Romans.  
 I. Corinthians.  
 II. Corinthians.  
 Galatians.  
 Ephesians.  
 Philippians.  
 Colossians.  
 I. Thessalonians.  
 II. Thessalonians.  
 I. Timothy.  
 II. Timothy.  
 Titus.  
 Philemon.  
 Hebrews.  
 James.  
 I. Peter.

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I. John.

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These lists suggest some interesting remarks:

1. The Fragment mentions several books not here named, which were not finally received by the Church; also an Apocalypse of Peter, "which," it says, "some of our body will not have read in the

Church." The Peshito contains no book not found in our canon.

2. The two lists contain eighteen books in common.

3. Together the two lists contain all the books found in our New Testament except Second Peter; and it should be remarked that no other book rests on such slender historical evidence.

4. Found, the one in Italy, the other Syria, these two documents speak for the Western and Oriental Churches in the second half of the second century. They show what was read in the West and East as Christian Scripture. The Fragment speaks throughout of "received and general opinion," and often refers to "the Catholic Church."

Again, these two lists suggest some interesting questions, as, for example, this one: "How are we to explain the omissions from them, on the theory that the books omitted circulated as Scripture in the second half of the second century?" A full answer to this question would embrace two classes of facts; facts that are peculiar to these documents, and facts that relate to all similar catalogues of the second and third centuries. Only the first branch of the inquiry will be touched in this place.

The omission of Matthew and Mark from the Fragment has already been explained. Bishop Westcott says the character of the other omissions help to explain them. First John is not mentioned, but is quoted in the early part of the manuscript. There is no evidence that First Peter was ever disputed, and the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistle of

James were well known in Rome, as we know from other evidence. Hence the cause of the omissions (the Bishop argues) can not have been ignorance or doubt. It must be sought in the original character of the writing, or in the condition of the existing text. On either supposition it is easy to explain the omissions; even as the Fragment now stands, we may perhaps find traces of books which it does not notice. The learned writer, however, leans to the theory that the document was not complete or continuous in the first place, but was made up of different passages from some unknown author. He also holds that the omissions of the Peshito admit of easy explanation. For this purpose he refers to the inconclusive character of the historical evidence of Second Peter; the Apocalypse, which was little known in the East, rests chiefly on the authority of the Western Church; and the two shorter and private letters of John could hardly have obtained currency in Mesopotamia in the second half of the second century.\*

It must all the time be borne in mind that our aim is merely to show the Canon in process of formation, and not to exhibit the evidence relative to the currency of The New Testament documents. Were the latter our object, we should be obliged to find large room for the testimony of such writers as Clement, Turtullian, and Irenæus.

Clement, for instance, makes quotations from, or allusions to, the Gospels, Acts, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus,

\* On the Canon of The New Testament, pp. 190, *et seq.*; pp. 213, *et seq.*



Hebrews, 1 Peter, 1 John, Jude, Revelation. His quotations and allusions are nearly one thousand in number. So accurate is Clement that his quotations are of great value for critical purposes. In his "Against Marcion," Tertullian quotes from nineteen books of The New Testament, sometimes naming them. They are the four Gospels, Acts, Romans, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 1 Peter, 1 John, and Revelation. In this single work his quotations and allusions are more than seven hundred in number, some of them slight, others including several verses. He makes two hundred and seventy-five from John's Gospel alone. In "Against Heresies" and in the fragments of his lost writings, Irenæus recognizes in the same way twenty-five books, viz.: the four Gospels, Acts, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1 and 2 John, and Jude. His quotations and allusions are even more numerous than Tertullian's.

## CHAPTER X.

### FURTHER HISTORY OF THE CANON.

IN the last chapter it was shown that, in the second half of the second century, the Canon of The New Testament had reached a high degree of completeness. I mean the collecting and authenticating of the books, in contradistinction to their composition. It was shown that the Muratori Fragment and the Peshito Version, in the form in which they come down to us, each contain the titles of sixteen of the books found in The New Testament, and that in the original form of the Fragment they contain each eighteen titles, viz.: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. It was shown, also, that the Fragment contains 2 John, 3 John, Jude, and Revelation, which are not found in the Peshito, and that the Peshito contains Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, and 1 John, which are not found in the Fragment. Only Second Peter therefore is missing from both lists. If we should pursue the inquiry through the remaining literature of the period, we should find

abundant confirmatory evidence of these conclusions. Thus, Clement makes quotations from or allusions to twenty-two New Testament books; in one of his works alone Tertullian quotes from nineteen, while Irenæus recognizes twenty-five books in a single work. Here, as before, a writer's failure to recognize a book does not prove that it did not exist and circulate.

One proposition is therefore clear, viz.: That the list of New Testament writings—that is, The New Testament Canon—was substantially agreed upon as early as the second half of the second century. To put the thought in another form, fully three-fourths of the writings now found in The New Testament had then attained a general currency and authority throughout the widely-extended Church. In a few cases the Church had not yet made up its mind; a few books were still in doubt; but it cannot be said that, if all the books that were doubtful or disputed were rejected, the historical basis of the Christian religion would be in any way weakened. By this time, too, the idea of a New Testament—that is, the idea of a complete collection of Christian Scriptures—was clearly defined in the Christian mind. Terms expressive of this idea began to appear. We find the names *Novum Instrumentum* and *Novum Testamentum*, the “New Instrument” and the “New Testament,” in Tertullian. Both seem to have been current in his time; the second being, he says, more commonly used. “Testament” is a literal translation of the well-known Greek word *diatheke*, and was no doubt suggested by Second Corinthians iii. 6. This name had superior merits to “Instrument,” and quickly became

the only name applied to the Christian Canon. About the middle of the third century, Origen speaks of the "Canonical Books," and about the close of the fourth, Chrysostom gave to the two Testaments, now brought together and equalized in the minds of Christians, the name they have since borne, THE BIBLE.

It has been stated that the Church had not, in a few cases, made up its mind at the close of the second century. As I here deal with a method or a process, and with specific facts only for illustration, I am not called upon to trace the history of these books one by one. Nor must it be supposed that any attempt has been made to present all the evidence showing the currency of the other books, and the fact of their acceptance as Scripture. Far from it; in fact, only a few of the many witnesses that might be called have been even named.

By and by the Canon naturally began to attract the attention of the Church Councils. Passing by the Council of Laodicea, the history of which in connection with this subject is in doubt, we come to the Third Council of Carthage, which sat in the year 397, and which promulgated a Canon of Scripture, Old and New. "Of the New Testament: Four books of the Gospels, one book of The Acts of the Apostles, thirteen Epistles of the Apostle Paul, one Epistle of the same [writer] to the Hebrews, two Epistles of the Apostle Peter, three of John, one of James, one of Jude, one book of the Apocalypse of John."\*

It cannot be said that this decree put an end to controversy, for the question of the Canon has been

\* Westcott, p. 408.



since opened by individual writers time and again; but the great body of Christian believers has ever clung to the Canon as it was finally agreed upon towards the close of the fourth century. Councils later than the Third of Carthage have reaffirmed the catalogue of Sacred Books, even down to our own day. This has not been done, however, so much to settle disputes as to declare what had been handed down and received as Scripture from earlier times. In fact, the decree of Carthage only declares the Church consensus, and settles the one or two questions that are still in doubt.

Frequent mention has been made of the Church. This term has been used as synonymous with the body of believers. When it is said such and such books "were received by the Church," the meaning is, by the great mass of Christians. The term is not used, therefore, in the corporate sense of Catholic and High Church writers. Manifestly no authority but that of the Church, as thus defined, was competent to pass upon the Christian Writings. The Gospels, the Epistles, etc., were written to Christians, and for Christians; they were understood and appreciated, in their history and doctrine, by Christians; and they alone could authenticate them. It was just as it would have been in the analogous case of the supposed Socratic Society mentioned in the introduction.

By what rules was the Church guided in making up its judgment? The answer to this all-important question is given by Dr. Davidson in these words:

"The preceding observations show that the formation of the New Testament Canon was *gradual*. The collection was not

made by one man, one council, at one time, or in one place. The adherents of the Christian religion in different lands came to agree in the same conclusion *progressively*, and by *tacit consent*. They did so *independently* to a great extent, in countries remote from one another. They judged by internal evidence, by tradition, by the fact of the writers being Apostles or Apostolic men. Some relied on one criterion, some on another; the majority perhaps on ecclesiastical tradition; the most reflecting and critical on internal evidence. Slowly and surely did they arrive at the entire separation of the Sacred Scriptures from the spurious imitations which were then current. And in the result of their judgment modern scholars commonly acquiesce." \*

This statement cannot be improved upon: "The adherents of the Christian religion in different lands came to agree in the same conclusion *progressively* and by *tacit consent*." The main questions concerning a book, from the very beginning, were these: "Did it have an Apostle or an Apostolic man for its author?" and "Has the book had currency in the churches from the first age?" Thus Tertullian declared: "Marcion's Gospel is not known to most people, and to none whatever is it known without being at the same time condemned."

Surprise has sometimes been expressed that the Canon was so long in forming—that books were in dispute, and that disputes lasted to so late a day; and the authority of the Canon has sometimes been objected to on this ground. The surprise and the objection argue a failure to understand the Primitive Church, and the world in which it existed. When we remember that the Gospel was at first oral preaching; that the books were widely scattered; that they had to prove themselves to a widely scattered Church, and

\* A Treatise on Biblical Criticism. Vol. II., pp. 36, 37.

that the means of comparing documents and weighing evidence were scanty,—there is no room for either surprise or objection. It should be remembered, too, that by far the larger share of The New Testament, both in number of books and in volume, never was in dispute, save as it may have been disputed by heretics. Moreover, the man who will to-day carefully follow the history of the Ancient Church in its dealing with the Canon, and seek to do what the Ancient Church did, will find himself repeating its mental history at every step. If he will set aside all decrees and canons of Councils, and seek from the original evidence to construct a canon for himself—using the very evidence that the Church used so far as it now exists—he will advance boldly where the Church advanced boldly, and where the Church hesitated he will hesitate. This has been the uniform experience of those who have honestly made the effort. Than this, the caution and the wisdom of the Ancient Church can have no better vindication. As Dr. Davidson says, in the judgment of the Ancient Church modern scholars commonly acquiesce.

Surprise is also sometimes expressed that it should have been for some time an open question whether certain writings not found in our Testament were not also canonical. Mention may be made of the Epistles of Clement of Rome and of Barnabas. There is nothing in the facts that should create surprise. These writings were accepted as genuine, but the question of the standing to be accorded to their authors only time could settle.

That plenty of time was taken to settle the various

points in dispute, was honorable to the Church rather than otherwise. On the whole subject the wildest statements are sometimes made. It is charged, for instance, that the status of every book in the Canon was determined by the votes of councils, often by small majorities, and that books which were thrown aside had claims to an Apostolic character quite as strong as other books that were admitted. Much has been said and written upon the absurdity of settling by yea and nay votes, in a great assembly, whether a given book was "Scripture" or not. So far from these representations dealing fairly with the facts, they are wholly false to the facts, and to the spirit which in the progressive settlement was made.

One point further may be urged. In respect to much the larger number of books, there was never any question at all as to whether they should be admitted to the Canon. So far as existing evidence shows, there was unanimity, practically so, concerning these books from the very beginning. For the sake of argument, we will suppose that in cases of doubt or hesitation the decision reached was as often wrong as right. What then? We are still left with three-fourths of the New Testament books, and more than three-fourths of the matter, substantially unaffected by internal disputes. Still more, several of the most important of the books go back to the middle of the first century; and if all others should be thrown aside, we should still have the most ample evidence to the existence, at that time, of the cardinal Christian teachings and institutions.





# INDEX.

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## JESUS AS A TEACHER.

- Aramaic, language of Jesus, 82.  
Accommodation, intellectual, Jesus recognizes, 126-130; to the feelings, 130-134.  
Aristotle, see philosophers, The Greek.  
Alford, Dean, on the meaning of prophecy, 79; parable defined by, 158, 159.  
Apperception, defined, 169-172; made use of by Jesus, 173-175.  
Authority, Jesus taught with, 113-117; of intuition, 117, 118; of scribes, 118-126.  
Bacon, on the skillful question, 190; his manner of approaching nature, 224.  
Baptism, 109-111; founded on the Oriental rite, 112.  
Babylon, exile of Jews to, changed their character, 27.  
Carlyle, Thomas, quoted on literary criticism, 131.  
Child, The, as a type of the disciple, 225; relation of life of to adult life, 225.  
Children, more prominent in literature than formerly, 214-217; causes for change, 217; attitude of Jesus to, 217-224.  
Christianity, a gospel and a discipline, 1; stress laid upon these factors in preparation of the world for, 94.  
Church, how founded by Jesus, 104-108; origin of name, 106; spirit of the, 108, 109.  
Compayré, quoted on method, 229, 230.  
Corban, the Rabbinical system of, 59-61; exposed by Jesus, 78.  
De Pressensé, on the Gospel, 2.  
De Quincy, quoted on the offices of literature, 242, 243.  
Education, two relations under which it may be regarded, 18, 19; suggests to most minds a school, 25; facts that influenced, at Rome, 25; Jewish, began with the mother, 28-30; the duty of the father, 30, 31; manner of, 32; thoroughness of, 34-38; superiority of the new over the old, 226.  
Emerson, R. W., never attempted to prove his teaching, 48.  
Faith, the kind Jesus preached, 238; Dr. Hatch quoted in regard to, 238-240.  
Farrar, Canon, on Oriental children, 16, 17; on Jesus's knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures, 38; of the Greek and Latin languages, 39; how he deals with the quotations of the New Testament, 88, 89; sets aside the (325)

- theory that Jesus borrowed from sects and teachers of his time, 98, 99;  
on the severity of Jesus, 204-207.
- Feasts, The Jewish, of Esther, of the Passover, of Weeks, of the New Year,  
of Tabernacles, 29.
- Feelings, The, influence of, 173.
- Geikie, Dr., on the teaching of the Rabbis compared with that of Jesus,  
119, 120.
- Gnomes, or maxims. See Proverbs.
- Goethe, on the Hebrew race, 26.
- Greece, created the intellect that has critically investigated the literature of  
the Jews, 70.
- Hatch, Dr., quoted on manner of Jesus's teaching, 70; on the Christian  
faith, 238-240.
- Hill, Dr. Birkbeck, quotation from the Life of Rowland Hill by, 208, 209.
- Inspiration, higher manifestation of spiritual intuition, 117.
- Isaiah, see Prophets, The Hebrew.
- Jacotot, quoted on teaching, 229.
- Jameson, Mrs., early Christian art embodies our Lord under that form in  
which he imaged himself, 4, 5.
- Jerusalem, Jesus's first visit to, 16, 17.
- Josephus, on the Jewish child, 17; on manner of Jewish education, 34, 35.
- Judaism, the beginning of our religion, 87.
- Keerux*, herald, The Greek, 1.
- Lange, Dr., Christ a teacher and mediator, 124; Christ's forms and methods  
of teaching, 136, 137, 139, 145, 146; definition of parable, 158; definition  
of proverb, 145; on currency of teaching by proverbs among the Jews,  
146.
- Law, The Roman, 25; The Jewish, characteristics of, enjoined upon parents  
to teach to their children, 26, 27; its adaptation to the wants of the peo-  
ple, 28; spirit of, sacrificed to the letter, 62-64; Jehovah, center of  
Jewish, 67; The Mosaic, a religious code, 68; influence of, upon Jesus,  
94-98.
- Lecky, W. E. H., describes the difference between Pagan and Christian  
teaching, 40.
- Milman, Dean, shows how legalism necessitated tradition, 54, 55.
- Ministers, Christian, 106.
- Ministry, The, Christian; functions of, 1; of Jesus, began at Capernaum, 6;  
kind of, 7-9; range of, 9-11; immediate effects of, 11; manner of, 11, 12;  
unique character of, 12, 13; qualifications for, 38-41.
- Method, Jesus's, of teaching, 125-146; developing defined, 176-178; recognized  
by Jesus, 178.
- Method, comparative, marks a stage in the progress of the human mind,  
92, 93; a wide difference of opinions in regard to, 229; Compayré quoted  
in regard to, 229; Jesus says nothing about, 230; greatest teachers say  
little or nothing of, 230.

- Neander, Dr., on Jesus' adaptation, 125-129; on His method of teaching, 136-140.
- Ordinances, Jesus recognized the necessity of, 109, 110; the Lord's supper, 112; baptism, 109.
- Orient, The, characteristics of, 19; customs of, 23, 24; literature of, 147-151.
- Paul, the Apostle, a preacher to the Gentiles, 13; quoted, 221.
- Parable, used by Jesus in teaching, 158-168; defined, 158, 159; used in Judæa from the time of the Judges to Jesus, 160; adapted to the teaching of Jesus, 161-163; most effective mode of teaching in New Testament, 163-165; why Jesus used, 165-168, 237.
- Peabody, Dr. A. P., on methods of teaching, 126, 127.
- Pentateuch, The, precepts of, 97.
- Perspective, defined, 184-186; Jesus recognized it in His teaching, 187-189; consequences of defects in, 189.
- Pharisees, The, sit in Moses's seat, 113; attempt to entangle Jesus in argument, 142-144.
- Philo, quoted in relation to the Law, 35.
- Philosophers, The Greek, Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, teachers unlike Jesus, 6; Socrates, ability to ask and answer questions, 190; Aristotle, about teaching, 87; his characterization of the East and West, 147.
- Philosophy, scheme or system of thought, 230; has its place, 230; Jesus a guide as to teaching, 231.
- Poimcen*, pastor, applied to Jesus, 4, 108; preacher, contrasted with teacher, 13; Jesus the first, of the Christian Church, 13.
- Prophecy, extinct, 121.
- Prophets, The, of Old Testament, preachers and teachers, 68, 69; how, and for what purpose quoted by Jesus, 79-82; spiritual truth emphasized by Micah, 96; by Isaiah, 96.
- Proverbs, or gnomes, a favorite mode of teaching among the Jews, 145; used by all Oriental peoples, 46; used by Solomon, 148, 153; in the hands of Jesus, 155, 157.
- Presbuteros*, elder, use of term in the early Church, 107, 108.
- Qualities, moral, courage, truth, justice, righteousness, give character its firmness, 201; compassion, pity, tenderness, innocence, give character its grace and loveliness, 201; justice compared with compassion, 202; all unite in Jesus, 204, 205; severe, of Jesus, 204-212; emphasis placed on the gentler, in recent times, 209, 210; naturalness and simplicity of Jesus, 225.
- Questions, ethical and practical, in morals, 190; different answers to, narrow and broad, 190, 191; manner of answering, a gauge of mental power of the teacher, 191; Jesus in respect to, a teacher of authority, 192-200.
- Rabbis, legalists and traditionalists, 54-56; effect of teaching, 56-62; Jesus expanded the teaching of, 72-77; work of, set at naught by Jesus, 86; succeeded the prophets and priests as teachers, 97, 98; official representatives of Jewish system of teaching, 114.



Rousseau, J. J., quoted on Jesus's teaching, 51; his interest in the child, 225.  
 Ruskin, John, quoted on morality, 245, 246.

Sabbath, meaning of, 62, 63; Jesus's treatment of, 74, 75.

Sadducees, The, questioned by Jesus, 194, 195.

Scribes, The, unlike Jesus in methods of teaching, 67; demanded that Jesus should conform to their rule, 61; authority of, 118, 119.

Scripture, books of, referred to by Jesus, 84; how handled by Him, 84-86; letter of, remains the same but with new meanings, 88.

Scriptures, The, subject to criticism, 65; not all of equal authority, 66, 67; Jewish, like Greek, practical and ethical, purpose of Jesus in quoting, 78-80.

Scudder, H. E., quoted on the child, 213.

Septuagint, The, Greek version of Scriptures, 82, 83.

Shepherd, The Good, the first conception of Jesus to be expressed in art, 4.  
 Socrates, see Greek philosophers.

Stanley, Dean, on the word "prophet," 3; Oriental life described by, 23, 24; on the synagogue, 105; gives origin of the name *Ecclesia*, 106; on origin of the sermon, 109; on baptism, 111, 122; likens Christ's teaching to Solomon's, 152; likened to Jesus by, 152, 153.

Teacher and teachers, qualifications of, Jesus possessed them in a high degree, 15, 42-47; Jewish, generally the *chazzan* of the synagogue, 31; position in Judea, 35, 36; the greatest religions, assume and do not attempt to prove fundamental truth, 48, 49, 50; intuition of Jesus as a, 50, 51; adaptation as a, 52, 53; priests and prophets considered as, 95-97; Jesus most original of, 100-103; a model, for those who should come after Him, 230; the wise, conducts his work according to certain pedagogical principles, 237.

Teaching, Lecky describes difference between Pagan and Christian, 40, 41; Jesus's manner of, 70-75, 232-236; formed no system of theological, 86; method of, 125-168; like Solomon's, 153-157; employed questioning in, 140-144; maxims, gnomes, or proverbs in, 145-157; use of the parable in, 158-168; use of illustrations drawn from common life in, 180-183; perspective in, recognized by Jesus, 187-189; imitation of the sterner passages in the life of Jesus, 211, 212; Jesus's theory of, 227; under three heads, 232; Jesus's manner of, 238; moral and religious, must take hold of the active principles of human nature, 243; characteristics of Jesus's, 243-245; Ruskin quoted on, 245.

Text-books, Jewish, the Bible, 15; the *Mischna*, 31; the *Talmud*, 32.

Titles, of Jesus, 5.

Theology, defined, 230; its place, 230; proper use of, 231; mistakes of Christian world in regard to, 242, 243.

Theory, proper meaning of, 227; no man of ideas without, 228; good and bad, 228; of the quack, 229; of the scientific physician, 229; educational, 229, 230; not a machine, 229.

WILL, The, part of, in mental growth, 172, 173.

## THE MAKING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Apostles, Acts of, different kind of writing from the Gospels, 259-262; reads like the Gospels, 257, 258.

Apostles, The Twelve, fitness of, how taught by Christ, 256, 257; oral teachers and preachers, 264; preaching of, covered more ground than that of Jesus, 267, 268; planted the first churches, 302, 303.

Bacon, his "anticipations," 297.

Bossuet, quoted on foundation of the Church, 259.

Canon, The, how made up, 300-304, 312-314; complete and final, 304, 305; definition of the word, 307, 308; of Marcion, 311; determined by the practice of the Church, 312; agreed upon, 318-320; question of admitting certain books to, 323.

Causes that led to the writing of the New Testament, 249.

Christianity, important facts concerning, free from dispute, 254.

Church, The, the great theme of the Christian Scriptures, 296; differentiation of, 296, 297; meaning of word, 320; how guided in judging books, 320, 321; history of, in relation to the Canon, 322.

Councils, The Church, reaffirmed the Canon, 319, 320.

Creeds, The, first replies of the Church to heretics, 311.

Davidson, Dr., quoted on the formation of the Canon, 320, 321.

De Presessé, on origin of the Gospels, 204-207.

Disciples, followers of Jesus, 286; ceased not to preach, 281, 282.

Epistles, The, written before the Gospels, 268; origin of, 269; characteristics of, 270-272; supersede the oral Gospel, 290; regarded as Scripture, 305; of Apostolic Fathers, 306; written to and for Christians, 320; of Clement and Barnabas, 322.

Fathers, The Apostolic, 306, 311, 312, 315, 316, 321.

Gospel, The, began with preaching, 265; spread of, 266; views of the history of, 280.

Gospels, The, differ from the Acts, 259-261; reasons for writing, 273-276; age of, 279; the first, sermons of the Apostles, 282, 283; need of, 283, 284; origin of, 284; how written, 292, 293; give true history of the first age of the Church, 294, 295; teaching of, ethical and spiritual, 295; faithfulness of, 293; written for Christians, 320.

Howson, Dean, quoted on first Epistle, 265, 266.

Inspiration, old theory of, 260.

Literature, New Testament treated as, 249-251; Christian, relating to the Canon, 312-314.

Ministry, The, of Jesus, starting point in considering making of New Testament, 255.

Muratorî Fragment, The, 312-314.

Neander, Dr., quoted on Apostolic Fathers, 263.

*Paradidonai*, *paradosis*, 285, 286, 288, 289.

Peshito Version, The, 312-314.

Preaching, oral, source of historical Christianity, 268; adaptation of, to early Christians, 272.

Renan, author of legendary theory, to account for Jesus, 255.

Scriptures, The, to be subjected to the same tests as other similar books, 250; illustrated by assumed Socratic writings, 251; difficulties in the way of, 252; full treatment of, not contemplated, 252; other, than those of the Old Testament, 305.

Strauss, Dr., author of myth theory to account for Jesus, 255.

Teacher and teachers, Jesus an oral, 258; Apostles also, 258; Jesus as a, compared with the Scribes, 262; with the Apostles, 262, 263.

Theories, The, to account for Jesus, changed, 255; Strauss and Renan propounded most important ones in recent years, 255.

Tischendorf, Dr., in regard to age of four Gospels, 294.

Tradition, growth of, 276, 277; original Christian, defined, 285-288.

Westcott, Bishop, on the Canon, 309-315.











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